

Teachings 2010 to 2000 Eckhart-Tolle-Teaching Compilation Part 6 of 8

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 1:15:54)

Yield of alert stillness. It doesn't matter how long, it's a timeless moment now. And maybe after three seconds of clock time, the mind may come in and say this is a beautiful flower.

But for three seconds, four seconds, five seconds, maybe much more. The sense perception happened within a field of still and alert presence. And maybe even the mind may come in after that and say, oh, I just perceived the flower in complete stillness, which is mental noise, of course.

But it is after that, the mind may come in different ways and claim and say something, or it may be very uneasy. The mind may suddenly come up with a huge amount of noise because it's frightened of that state of stillness because it thinks it's out of control now. I am not controlling the universe anymore.

If I don't interpret and judge every moment, how do I figure out what this thing is all about this moment? And the amazing thing is, more often than not, you don't need to figure out what this is all about. You just need to look.

In the same way that the artist looks at a canvas in a state of that intense presence, you look at a situation. And not attempting to figure it out. That is habitual, of course.

So the ability arises. At first, you see it when you're in little perceptions and it's not being labeled. There's a spaciousness suddenly that is there, in which it, and that is, what that means is the world around you that before was a conceptualized reality because you imposed mental labels on everything immediately which deadened the world around you.

People don't realize how dead the universe that they inhabit has become through immediate and compulsive mental labeling. All you relate to then is the labels. You mistake the labels for what's there.

On a simple level, you mistake, if that's a lily, I'm not sure, the label lily, you think you know what it is. What is this? Oh, it's a lily.

Hmm. That's the end of it. But there is such, the mystery that is there, the incredible beauty and depth that is there is gone completely because you've labeled it.

But if you allow the perception to arise in the field of stillness, it suddenly comes to life. It has a depth to it. And a beauty and even a sacredness which before, completely unaware of.

And the entire universe you realize is an alive organism that humans have deadened, well, to themselves. As far as they are concerned, the world is a dead place. So when you begin to allow perceptions to arise without compulsive labeling, the world comes alive again.

There's a depth to everything and a mystery. You don't fall into the delusion that when you have a little sound about something, then you know what it is. Lily.

Or even worse with human beings, when you have a little set of judgments about a human being, then you think you know who that human being is and the depth, aliveness and sacredness that is there in every human being is gone totally, it's not there for you. All you know is that, oh, he is a such and such, she is a such and such and this is what she did and said and this is how she always is. And if you've gone, all you know is you've said a little bit about the conditioning of that person and a lot about your own conditioning, that's all.

It was partly a projection of your own conditioning and partly perhaps a seeing of the conditioning of that person, if you're lucky. And so you reduce human beings to absurd caricatures by imposing a set of labels and think that's, people even do it to their partners. They don't see the partner anymore, just the opinion now, the labels that they have, that's how she is, that's all.

And that's, human relations are so problematic, conflict-ridden because there are no human relations. There are conditioned mind entities relating to each other but the being of the human being is obscured by the labeling. The being isn't there, just minds interacting.

So at first you walk, nature can be a great help as you enter that state of aware presence. You walk through nature or you sit somewhere and simply watch for a while, oh. Now this is very much like a one-year-old baby would watch the world, a baby that hasn't accumulated the labels yet in the mind.

There's a small stage when the baby's aware of surroundings but has not yet accumulated the necessary labels to interpret the surroundings. So it hasn't even started to ask, what's this, what's this, what's this yet? Because that's the mind, it simply looks.

And some babies, you can see it very clearly, there's enormous consciousness light shining through their eyes. Enormous love and joy looking through their eyes at you and you know they're not saying anything in their heads about you. They have no opinion about you.

There's true communication, true communion as they look. And some humans can sense that so they feel drawn to that baby and they don't want to leave. They might make funny noises or something through, oh little, but the baby doesn't really need that.

But they feel drawn to the baby because there's almost a self-recognition there. Oh, and that is the, it is the destiny of humans to re-enter that state. But when they re-enter that state, it will have an added knowing to it because they have moved through the stage of mind and thought.

Humanity as a whole has moved through that evolutionary cycle that is identification with thought a long, long, long cycle for humanity. And it's been tough. It's been tough on humans, as particularly in the later stages when in the later stages of any evolutionary cycle, it is that cycle, that state that is in that cycle displays increasing dysfunction.

So it's been tough for humans and even more tough for the planet as humans are moving into greater and greater dysfunction because the cycle of identification with thought is coming to an end and a thought-based self is coming to an end. The planet is suffering greatly from human madness because we really need to call it now madness. Nothing wrong.

It's not saying that shouldn't be happening. It is right for humans to be mad at this moment, but we need to see it also as madness that is also right. The caterpillar becomes a butterfly.

In the final stage of the caterpillar's life, the caterpillar becomes dysfunctional as a caterpillar. It doesn't work anymore. Humans now have become dysfunctional on the planet.

It's not working anymore. We are destroying ourselves and the planet. Yes, this is the end of the evolutionary cycle.

That's why it's mad, not that it shouldn't be happening. This is within the totality. It could not be otherwise, but part of this is to see that it is mad, not condemning it as bad and shouldn't be happening, but to see it.

And the seeing is already the beginning of liberation because that which sees the conditioned and its dysfunction is the arising of the unconditioned consciousness. And so increasingly, there's the ability to witness your own mind. And then there's the ability to dwell in the gaps.

One thought comes to an end, no other thought has started. There's a gap of still presence. And in that gap, there's great intelligence at work.

This could be a very passive state. You're sitting on a park bench, simply looking in amazement at the beauty of all these forms all around you. And then it exists as a dynamic state, which arises whenever you are confronted with a challenge.

And life tends to do that. It doesn't leave you alone for too long. And up comes another

challenge, some situation.

And instead of being drawn back into the old reaction, the conditioned reaction, the old resistance pattern, instead of that, you meet the challenge through alert presence, stillness, allow it to be. And there is a flow, one could say, a current of awareness flows through this form into the situation that is the challenge. And this is an amazing thing, the arising of this ability to simply look.

To simply give attention. So what then flows through you, one could say, all words are limited. So take that into consideration.

They're only approximations. One could say what flows through you is, or what arises, a field of attention. And that is the expression of unconditioned intelligence.

And any situation that you face fully in that way, because the old reaction never faces the situation fully. It denies it, runs away from it. It never faces this moment fully, which is the only place where a challenge can arise.

And in that way, it is faced immediately and intelligent action, if action should be needed, arises. Or no action may arise and the intelligence that you are now aligned with, the one intelligence, acts upon the situation from some external point. In other words, here's the challenge, attention flows.

You allow the prerequisite for the current of awareness to flow into a situation. The prerequisite for that is that you allow this moment to be, because you have given up arguing with what is. You have seen that is already is.

Whatever is, is. Not that it cannot be changed, but at this moment, it is as it is. Not only that, it also could not be otherwise.

If it is, it couldn't be otherwise. Because the tiniest we separate events and say, this is a separate event. This is a separate situation, but nothing is separate.

Every event happens within the totality of the entire cosmos. It is a web of interconnectedness with which every seemingly separate event is connected. Whatever happens is totally connected with everything else.

So how could it not, it couldn't be otherwise for that reason. So it is madness to argue internally with the suchness of now. And that is, of course, to argue internally with the suchness of now is the normal human state of dysfunction.

And they think this is how they are going to change the world. The opposite is true. This is how the world remains the same in its dysfunction.

So the shift now is you see the futility of arguing with the suchness of now, no matter what form it takes. And then you allow the suchness of now to be as it is, which is not a

state of passivity, but dynamic. You allow it, oh.

Now, certain situations, it is enough to allow the situation. Other situations require action, intelligent action. And the one intelligence that is greater than the human mind, the unconditioned, operates.

And it may operate as an external event that suddenly changes the situation. A coincidence, a factor that comes in that meets the needs of this moment. Just right.

And perhaps you did nothing. In some cases, you just sit there and watch. In some cases, no immediate action is possible.

There are situations, the challenge is there, but there's not yet anything I can do. So it's simply allowed and you continue the outflow of awareness that simply is there. And then when action becomes possible or necessary, it happens either through you or through an external factor or the situation changes by itself.

And this is amazing realization that in this way, problems do not arise anymore in your life because problems is to mentally dwell on challenges that either are not even here, that might arise, or challenges that at this time you cannot do anything about. And then you play around with thought in circles, round and round and round about these situations. And that's a problem.

Now you have a problem. And in its madness, the mind-based self likes that. It doesn't say that openly, but it can increase its sense of self.

You can enhance. It can enhance its sense of self because now it has serious problems. So I must be important.

This is the underlying assumption. And I like, therefore, I like to think about how important my problems are. And so you get totally absorbed by your life situation, by the story in the head.

And this is the state that I described as the state of absence. You're gone. Dream world in the head, thinking you're taking responsibility for your life by worrying and lying awake at night, thinking about what the future holds for you and what the future might do to you or what the future might withhold from you.

And it's, so that's, oh my God, this is how humans live. This is the normal way to live. And of course, by the way, normal these days means insane.

And so the root of dysfunction is in oneself. Where else could you really find it? And the transformation of the world is in yourself.

Out of that transformed consciousness comes a transformed world. Because we know the one good thing that has come out of physics, apart from the atom bomb and

chemical warfare or whatever they do, hydrogen bomb. And a good thing that has come out of it is they have seen the interconnectedness between the observing consciousness and that which is being observed.

A change in perspective changes what you're observing. And that was an amazing realization that came out of modern physics and that has enormous repercussions. And you can see how the world, what we experience as the world in reality, now I'm talking about, especially the so-called man-made world, human-made world.

What we really experience, what you experience when you switch on your TV or in your, the world, whatever you experience as the world is basically your state of consciousness. So, and it's collective, it's not a personal, nobody to blame for anything. It's a collective human condition.

We have created this world. It is not entirely mad. There are redeeming features to it.

If it were entirely mad, it would already have self-destructed. It got very close in the latter, in the last century. It already got very close several times to self-destruction in its madness.

And it is still close. We are not free yet from the possibility of self-destruction, although the new state is arising. The only question is, is it arising fast enough?

Is it arising on a wide enough scale to compensate for the increasing madness of the old egoic consciousness and what it's doing to the planet and to human beings, to themselves, what they are doing to themselves? The fact that we are here is a good sign. This is the arising of the new.

I don't make any predictions because I don't know whether humanity is going to make it. Ultimately, of course, it doesn't matter. The universe is infinitely abundant in the life forms that it manifests.

The one intelligence manifesting as so many life forms and many life forms, after a while, the one consciousness says, okay, that's enough. I'm withdrawing from there. And it's gone.

And then it flows into something else and maybe it flowers through this form. I know that it wants to flower through the human form. And there's no predicting what the world will look like once human consciousness has flowered collectively.

There's no point in even speculating. Be it enough to say that you wouldn't even recognize the planet, it would look like some strange, perhaps heavenly realm, and if you went there with an ego, you would feel very uncomfortable. Oh, I need to get back to the old earth.

So that it is a great challenge and a great adventure and a great opportunity to be alive at this time. Not that you are separate from the consciousness, you are an expression of the one consciousness. The question is, is that one consciousness now going to move through you?

Is the cosmic evolutionary impulse finding a sufficiently clear space here so that it can move in and move through and then emanate through this form? Some people will create wonderful things. Others will simply emanate the state of joy, peace, aliveness, and love, and walk through the world emanating that state and be a blessing to whoever they meet.

That's quite enough, isn't it? And others may create great things. Others will say, I don't need to create anything.

It's simply to embody that state. That's the flowering, as I mentioned before, somewhere, maybe in the book, I can't remember. The planet, there was plant life on the planet for millions of years, they say, before there ever was a flower.

After millions of years of plant life, I'm told, one day, the first flower must have opened. And when a plant becomes a flower, it's an analogy, as I'm using it here, for a new level of, a new dimension of being, of consciousness. But what is happening to humans is much vaster than even that, but it's a beautiful analogy.

And then it took thousands of years before another flower came, probably, and then two or three. And then suddenly, a profusion of flowers all over the planet. And this is very similar.

We've had early flowers in humanity. The great teachers of humanity, one can look upon them as early flowerings of human consciousness. The possibilities that are inherent in the human form for the first time express themselves fully through those great teachers, sages, only some of whom we know about, some were relatively unknown.

So there were rare flowers here and there. And then a time comes when we are ready for the flowering on a much larger scale. And it cannot not be now, otherwise it's the end.

So it must be now. This is the time. It goes far beyond anything personal in your life.

On a personal level, it's very pleasant because it frees you from inhabiting an absurdly complex world of problem-making. That's great. So on a personal level, it takes the weight of you.

The weight of the self, the mind-made self that already the Buddha, the early flower that he was, recognized a profound insight too early, probably for much too early for his time to see the illusion of self that was the primordial insight of the Buddha. My God, he saw that. And so that's where it flowered.

As one Buddhist monk who was asked to explain the meaning of Buddhism simply said, the meaning of Buddhism is this, no self, no problem, finished. Oh. Oh.

Yes, but I'd like to learn some philosophy. Can you teach me? I have plenty of time.

Please give me time, says the self. I want to complete myself in time. So the burden of self, of that delusion, you don't walk around with that heaviness anymore because you become a heaviness on the planet.

And whatever you walk on, you crush. A heavy self walking, millions of heavy selves walking on the planet, crushing life. And they don't even know it.

Life, what's life? It's just a little something, says the mind. And this is timber.

It's worth \$6 million, I would say. So, okay, we can cut that in no time. And it's gone.

A forest that was there for 100,000 years, where a field of sacredness, but the mind can't see it because the mind labeled it. And that's nobody's fault. It's the human dysfunction.

So the heaviness of self, the heaviness of self leaves you. Free of that delusion, that entity that was so hard to live with, the me, that I had such a problematic relationship with. And now, there's simply, where there was a heavy me, there's a field of aware presence, walking, sitting, moving, being.

It doesn't make problems anymore for itself. For other humans, for the planet. It doesn't create suffering anymore for itself.

For other humans, for the planet. So this is why, since ancient times, they've used the word liberation to talk about this shift in consciousness because all the ancient teachings, they point to it, and they sometimes call it liberation. From what?

Even in the New Testament, they use that expression. Free, Jesus talks about, you will be free. You will know the truth.

The truth will make you free. Free, they said, we're already free. We are nobody's slaves.

And Jesus said, no, you are not. And he used the language that he used at the time. He said, you are the slaves of sin.

Now, what's sin? If he were talking nowadays, he would have said, you're totally conditioned entities and you're completely unconscious. You're the slaves of your conditioning.

That's all. It's the dysfunction that is sin. No more, it's nobody's fault.

It's the original sin, which is the collective dysfunction. That's all. It's not the way in which it's usually interpreted, but there's a truth in it, a deep truth.

And just as there's original sin, there's original innocence, which is the sanity in you, which is the unconditioned consciousness in you. That's far vaster than the little original sin, far vaster, the little original sin is a little illusion. It only appears big when you are totally trapped in it.

So this is the liberation already happening. And as you walk away from here, you will have lost some weight, not physical weight, that doesn't matter, but the weight of me, myself, the problem making me. If this were not already happening here, you would not have been able to sit here for an hour and a half, according to clock time.

It would have become unbearable. Or you had to exert such willpower that you made yourself sit here, but that's unlikely. So the greatest adventure that any human being can be involved in, you are involved.

And some people are still asking about their life purpose. That is your life purpose. To embody this transformation.

That's your primary life purpose. Nothing else matters. Your secondary life purpose then is what form your external life takes as you embody this transformation.

But you don't really need to do a lot of thinking about that because that looks after itself. Thank you. Being here without expectancy, without a need for future, the psychological need.

Is it possible to be here completely where your field of attention is not being right now filled up with anything? Unless there's a lot of mental noise in your head as you sit here, in which case the stream of thought is filling up that space of now. And it's a strange thing to become aware of the space of now without needing to fill it up with something.

But if it's already filled up with mental noise, then you can at least see that and accept that. And in that seeing and in that accepting, there is a space even around the mental noise. And there's some spaciousness there even with a noisy mind.

So the little secret is when you become aligned with this moment now, no matter what's going on, there is space. And in that space, in that acceptance of what is, you go beyond what is. In the non-acceptance of what is, you remain stuck with what is.

Although you could remove yourself to some other place and the same stuckness condition would arise very quickly. Stuck again. So one could say, although all words are limited, there's object consciousness.

That's the normal state for most human beings. They're identified with objects in their consciousness. Thought streams, emotions, sense perceptions.

Some they like, some they dislike. And then there is space consciousness. This is just a

temporary perspective on it.

And most humans don't know that yet. Some stumble upon this accidentally almost. And are astonished.

Space consciousness, what is that? It's, first of all, space consciousness arises at this very moment as you sit here and pay attention to the words. Words, that's object consciousness.

Words arise in your consciousness as temporary forms. Same as your own thoughts, not much difference. But you also pay attention, and this is unusual for many people, to the silent spaces between the words.

Paying attention simply means, one could say, to listen to the silence that isn't part of this talk. If it's a talk, they're just words, it's not really a talk. And that's a strange thing.

At first it seems pointless, or the mind says, listen to the silent spaces. Well, that's not very interesting. No, of course it's not interesting.

Only object consciousness is interesting because every object is so fascinating. Oh, look at that, on that. And every object you have some relationship with.

Reactual, but what relationship could you have with space? And it certainly isn't interesting as such. Interesting means it's feeding the need of the mind to add more content, more objects, because the mind wants always more.

It's the egoic mind, the self, mind made self. And space consciousness is nothing that you could add because there seems to be nothing there. So you pay attention to the silent spaces between words, sentences, and not only that.

Also, you simply pay attention, or one could say, listen, acknowledge that there is, one could say there are two dimensions to this talk. The words and the field, the space, the silence. Usually in a talk, people come to listen to the words, to take in new information, more of something.

And here, you're being invited, yes, to listen to the words, but it's being pointed out that there is a deeper dimension that mostly people would be unconscious of unless it's pointed out or they find it accidentally. There's an underlying field, how the words couldn't even exist without the space, the stillness. Certain kinds of music can do the same.

Music where stillness is an important element. And usually even there, people are not directly conscious of it. They only sense it is so deep and beautiful and sacred, and they still believe it's in the sounds.

But what really is the depths of that music lies in the ground out of which the sounds

come. And the sounds point to that. And that's called very deeply spiritual kinds of music.

Because as you listen, something shifts inside you. Particularly if you bring conscious attention to the underlying ground, that shift happens to you the moment you pay attention to the field of stillness. That moment is the arising of that field of stillness in you.

Because with thought, you cannot listen to silence. With thought, the thinking mind, you can only listen to words or notes, sounds, but not silence. The moment you tune into silence, silence or stillness arises in you.

The moment you begin to listen to it, a dimension arises in you that we could call space consciousness, unconditioned consciousness. As it arises as a field of alert presence. And the objects are still there in consciousness, the sounds of the music, or in this case, the words.

But just as in those types of music, the sounds point beyond themselves, just as these words are not saying, listen to me, this is important. The words are not important because they point beyond themselves. So the words have no self-importance.

They are quite unimportant because we are here, not for that. You have enough of object consciousness, the whole world is immersed in it. You have enough information, bombarded by information, do you need more?

No. And a similar thing in certain types of painting, Eastern paintings, you have a landscape with a little tree down here, a rock and a bird maybe flying just at the top of the painting across. And 85% of the painting is empty space.

And so from a mind perspective, this is not a significant painting because there isn't very much there. Is that all? Couldn't he have done a little bit more to fill this canvas or the paper?

And that type of painting doesn't say, look at me, how great I am. Look at how, even the artist doesn't say, look what I can do. The artist denies him or herself and the painting denies itself as something because it's all pointing to something deeper than form.

And so a strange thing happens when you acknowledge that dimension in your life. And if you don't know that dimension, you don't know the most important thing there is, being itself, the ground itself, the essence of who you are. You go through your whole life immersed and identified with and having a problematic relationship with object consciousness.

And every object that arises in consciousness matters so much. And it has something to do with you. You need it or you want to push it away.

So in other words, all you know is the world. All you know is this dimension of stuff, material stuff, mind stuff. All you know is that, and you go around battling with the stuff of this world and you get tired after a while.

More stuff, there's only more stuff coming. All that you can gain here is more stuff or lose the stuff that you've accumulated as the content of your mind and then suffer because it's painful to die as that illusion. So notice as you sit here, if there is a restlessness in you at this moment, maybe you're not even hearing what I'm saying.

It could be that restless. That is you're immersed in object consciousness thoughts. And it's frustrating because nothing is being given to add to that.

And then you can notice that. Oh, oh, there's it, there it is. So, and you acknowledge that.

And suddenly you become conscious of the silent spaces. You listen to the silent spaces. And for that, to be able to do that, a certain alertness.

It's required. And the strange thing happens as you listen to silence and it may not never be there for long. Thought seizes, comes to a stop because you cannot listen to silence with thought.

You don't have to stop your mind. Just listen to silence. That's it.

And the moment thought resumes, you're no longer listening to the silence. And it is good to live in that way, the two dimensions. The essence dimension, space consciousness, the dimension one could say of the absolute and the dimension of the relative in which you move in this world as a physical body, interact with all these different forms.

And then there's a balance in your life. For most people, all they have is the world, the stuff, and they are lost in it. They are lost in it and trying to find themselves in and through it, for which they need future.

So our gathering here isn't really a lecture, a talk, it's something else. We don't even have a name for it. But in India, where they've been at it for longer, there's the expression satsang, which perhaps could be translated as in the company of being, to be with being.

Because this is being, being, existence is form. Being is prior to form. Being is the essence of who you are.

In the company, really it means, traditionally satsang means being in the company of the teacher. But the deeper meaning is being with yourself, not the mind made self, with a deeper essence of who you are. So we, this, I sometimes call this a portal into that state

of consciousness that is the state of presence, of awareness, pure thoughtless awareness, the state of awake, being awake.

Thought arises again, yes. But as you dwell in that ground of no thought, thought loses its capacity to make you unhappy. You're no longer totally identified with every thought.

You recognize the relativity of thought. You recognize that no thought contains the entire truth. You recognize that whatever thought you think is a tiny fragment.

And in many cases, more often than not, the opposite thought is equally true. It's just a different perspective. And many other perspectives are possible and thought can then be contained.

The polarities of thought, you're no longer identified with one polarity. If they could know this in certain, in many parts of the world, where there is violent conflict, each party is identified with one perspective, one viewpoint. There's no, this is the truth.

We have the truth. Only our perspective is true. To see the relativity of thought and whatever thought you have about yourself, it's not it.

And so you can have a relationship with thought that is a little bit loose. And you stand back and say, okay, here goes another thought that's telling me you can't make it, you're not good enough, whatever it says. Or you're, if only the world would recognize how great you are, whatever thought.

And it's recognized as thought. You don't totally believe in every thought anymore because it's conditioned. Other thoughts arise as you inhabit, as you dwell, are rooted in being.

Increasingly, thoughts arise that are very different from the conditioned mind activity. Those are thoughts of greater power. Those are also thoughts that can create, manifest the famous, in new age, many people are interested in manifesting through thought.

And of course, everybody's doing it already. Everybody's manifesting whatever their world is through thought. Mostly it's unconscious.

But there's no point in dwelling on the possibilities that are inherent in thought as far as external manifestation is concerned, unless you have gone through the shift in consciousness so that you are not trying to manifest as a dissatisfied little egoic entity. And through your manifestation, trying to complete yourself or make yourself happy through this or that, that won't work. So it is primary to allow the shift in consciousness to happen so that you recognize yourself as not what you thought you were, as the illusion of me and my story which needs to complete itself and then desperately tries to manifest something, perhaps succeeds.

Of course, it works quite often. And then for a little while, it's great. And then that doesn't fulfill its purpose either.

Later, as this arises, you don't need to be concerned anymore with how to manifest because you become then a powerful manifestor, if that's a word. But it flows from the depths of your being. That which is manifesting your reality then is not the little egoic entity, but the one intelligence which is flowering through you.

And that suddenly thoughts come that you couldn't even have thought before as an egoic entity. And then manifestation happens through you and it's beautiful. So thought is powerful and whatever you manifest in thought, through thought externally, will pertain to the world of external forms which come and go.

Nothing lasts forever. That remains and that's fine. So here we are not focusing on how to manifest, but on something more vital, how to be yourself first.

Finding the portals into the unconditioned state of consciousness, then that operates. And here is one portal. And that portal is listening to the space, the silence.

And then being aware of that which comes up the objects at the same time. As God is defined in one of the Upanishads, as it's not that which you see, but that which makes all seeing possible. It's not that which you hear.

It's that which makes all hearing possible. It's not what you think. It's that which makes all thought possible.

So this stillness, we could say, that is here as external silence, which is inner stillness, is the greatest mystery, enormous depths in that. And Buddhists, so that you cannot make it into another mind object, call it emptiness. And that's very clever.

If you call it fullness, which is equally true, then it's easier for the mind to say there is something there. It becomes a mind object. I believe in fullness, but it's much harder to say I believe in emptiness because that means you believe in nothing.

So this is a portal and it's an important one which you can use to access that state of consciousness. It's a simple fact. And outer silence helps initially with that practice because there is something you can actually listen to the silence.

Out in nature, there will be a few sounds, but underlying the beautiful sounds that you hear in nature, there will be this vast realm of stillness in which these sounds appear. And it is that which gives people that even if they are not conscious of it directly, they sense a depth, a beauty beyond the forms which are beautiful, but a depth to nature and a sacredness that they can't define. What is it that makes this so sacred and beautiful?

Yes, the forms, each flower, but there's even more. There's something that is beyond the

forms that gives it its sacredness. And yes, it is the underlying field.

And so when you walk in nature, also you can be in both worlds, so to speak, or rather in the world and in being as you listen, you walk around listening to the sounds and to the underlying stillness. Alertness is required for that. No tension, just a relaxed alertness.

It arises spontaneously as you listen and there's a depth. And so already you are walking through nature in the state of thoughtless presence, awareness. Wow.

And then suddenly a thought comes in. It's no longer a problem. It's just a thought.

It comes in and another, and spaces in between. You are, and as you walk in that state, you're no longer, your history becomes unimportant. Your past and future, even your name and the story of me recedes.

And instead what arises is unconditioned, a field, the field of unconditioned consciousness. And nature is helpful because nature does not stimulate thought. A city where everything is human made is more likely to stimulate mind activity because the city is created by the human mind.

It's the externalized mind. The noise of the city is the externalized mental noise and never have humans lived in a more noisy civilization. Maybe one day this civilization will be called the noisy civilization because it, and of course the poisonous civilization also, it creates an enormous amount of noise.

It's an externalization of the increasing mental noise and you being totally, so they create a very noisy world and they looking for new means of making more noise. And they have to fill up every space with noise. I don't know how it is here, but in North America, finding a restaurant without loud music is almost impossible these days.

You have to look very hard and you open the door and put in your head and it goes, and walk out again. And noise is of course, it's something is happening, objects arising, right? So, so nature does not stimulate thought.

Of course, it doesn't mean that thought doesn't arise. Most humans, when they go into nature are full of thought and peripherally they see for a little while, they say, oh, that's a beautiful flower. And then the mind goes about their problems.

And then they look again, there's a moment of recognition of beauty. If they could catch that moment, there's a looking, but the label hasn't come up yet. There's a fragment, there's a little space when they look at this flower.

At first, you glance about the tree or the sky. And in many humans that the gap is for one second, two seconds. Or if you deepen, three seconds, four seconds.

And if you deepen even more, 10, 20. And then already you are walking or standing in

awe of, and then perhaps a thought may come, beautiful. But many humans only have that as a gap of one second, two seconds, and immediately thought comes.

And that is the veil that descends between that. It's a conceptualized veil. Now, everything in nature exists in the state of no thought.

Intelligence manifests through all these forms. All these forms are the manifestation of this one intelligence and they are beautiful, but it is prior to thought. There was no committee meeting that said, let's work out how we can create a beautiful flower.

Let's think, a think tank. Let's, okay, let's draw our plans. Let's put data into the computer.

And then after a thousand hours of thinking, you still couldn't create a rose. But the rose didn't come out of thought. It came out of stillness.

The tree came out of stillness, grows in stillness. Timeless also. And the entire universe is very, very still.

No sound in outer space, only in science fiction movies, just to give the impression that something is happening because nobody could stand watching it, that silence. But no, there's no sound. A whole galaxy could explode, which would take millions of years and wouldn't make a single sound.

And whole galaxies are born out of complete stillness. And there is an intelligence at work in that stillness. The one intelligence.

Even the human mind has come out of it as a little experiment in noise. It's fine. And the monkeys also, that's a few experiments with noise.

Monkeys, some monkeys are very noisy.

[Speaker 7] (1:15:55 - 1:15:59)

They go, grr, grr, grr, grr, grr, grr, grr, grr, grr, grr, grr.

[Speaker 1] (1:15:59 - 3:13:47)

Very much like the human mind. That's why Buddhists call the mind the monkey mind. So to use as a portal silence and listening to silence in nature or at home, anywhere, right here.

The silence here, the stillness is the true teacher. One could say, because it is the arising of space consciousness, of the unconditioned consciousness. So this is a powerful portal.

And as you listen to that, then you realize it's not really caused by the external silence. It can arise anywhere, no matter whether in your external surroundings, there is a silent

space or not. Because there are situations in this noisy world, many places and situations, there's hardly ever a silent space.

You're bombarded by noise and noise making, even in the office or at your workplace. In the family, always things going on. Many families, we go there, there's two or three TVs on, children screaming, parents saying, get this done, do this, we're in a hurry.

And now a beautiful thing, when you notice that the arising of stillness can happen by itself, the listening to silence is really the arising of inner stillness. And for that, you don't really need, it's beautiful if you have the stillness outside and you use that as a portal. But once you become familiar, so to speak, with that state, it can be there no matter where you are as the simple arising of thoughtless awareness.

And this brings us to another portal, very powerful one, which takes you into the same place. And that is a portal of acceptance of what is, takes you also into space consciousness. And this is interesting.

Acceptance of what is, we spoke about it already, because it is, there's nothing you can do with is. You can argue with it, but it's futile. Is is as it is at this moment.

What can you do? And so you accept, or you don't accept. And if you don't accept, contraction arises.

The self gets strengthened, the illusion of the me in that non-acceptance, the boundary around me gets strengthened. So the sense of identity, the artificial, delusory, illusory sense of identity gets strengthened through the non-acceptance. This shouldn't be.

And the noise-making of the mind becomes stronger when you deny what is. Because if you watch the noise-making, the compulsive thought activity, a lot is to do with projecting yourself into a future moment. In other words, trying to get away from this one to a more fulfilling one, a more complete, powerful, pleasurable one.

So the acceptance of what is externally, then there's a stillness of peace, and a stillness arise, no matter what the external condition is, if it is accepted internally, welcomed, the isness of it. But if you can't do it, contraction arises. But if you are aware of that, the emotion that arises through non-acceptance, anger, sadness, you watch that, what do you do with that?

It is as it is. Then you accept that. And every time you accept on level one, you accept what is externally.

So you do not create inner resistance. You do not strengthen the illusory self through that. And a spaciousness arises around what is.

If you miss that opportunity, resistance is there. You can't do that. But suddenly you

recognize resistance is there.

And you recognize the emotion that is arising in this situation. And instead of saying, oh, you see, you failed again. You see, acceptance is totally pointless.

You give up even trying to accept. You can't, you see, you're failing at this just as you failed at that. No.

No. If you see it, it's enough. There's the turbulence of the emotion.

What do you do with that? It already is. You allow it to be.

And that suddenly, again, there is a space around the anger or the irritation, the tightness, through the yes. Let's say an irritating noise happens and you feel the irritation. You don't catch it quickly enough to say, well, there were children where noisy before.

Irritation could arise and you don't catch it quickly enough. You've forgotten that this is a school and this is what children do. And so the mind says, it shouldn't be noisy here.

We've come for a spiritual talk. And so if you don't catch it soon enough, the irritation is there within a moment and it's accompanied by certain thoughts. The thoughts are critical of this moment.

And then suddenly you catch that and you say, hmm, you've sensed the irritation. You see the thought that goes with it and then you say, well, there it is. There's the turbulence, let it be.

What can you do? You can't argue with it. It shouldn't be here.

You have another problem on top of the irritation. You create the problem that you shouldn't be irritated with all the spiritual work you've done. You shouldn't be, by now, you should be beyond this by now.

Well, but there it is. And so you say, oh, the irritation. And you simply, there is a flow of this attention.

You give it some attention, gentle flow of attention. And it is. And suddenly there's a space around the irritation.

It's still there, but it's being contained within a greater spaciousness. So in other words, you are now in touch with space consciousness. You know yourself ultimately as not that which arises, but that which contains all that arises.

And you know yourself as that simply through accepting whatever arises instead of battling with it. So the doorway, the portal into self-realization is not some kind of

needing to become more and more something that you are not yet. And beating yourself up when you're not living up to certain ideas in your head that perhaps have been put there by teachings or reading books of how enlightened beings should behave.

And I'm not there yet. That's not the enlightened being. Nothing in form is beyond the polarities as this form, including enlightened entities, beings.

They will express somewhere certain polarities in their life. They might like chocolate cake or whatever, or go to Starbucks and drink coffee as I do sometimes. And then people say, you drink coffee?

You shouldn't be drinking coffee. Well, it's only two or three times a week. Well, you shouldn't be drinking coffee.

You should be beyond that. And then you can internalize that as a voice in your head. I haven't made it yet.

The state of perfection has not been reached yet. You can struggle for a long time with that. And then you see that's not the way.

There's a much quicker way. And that quick way has no problems in it. And it doesn't make yourself into a problem or anybody else into a problem or any situation into a problem that is to be overcome.

The mind itself likes that because then it can struggle and be in opposition to something, even itself. It likes to be in conflict with itself. And so the doorway into the state of perfection is acceptance of the is-ness, whether it be external or if you miss it there, your second chance is internal.

It is. And then you are no longer completely caught up in what is, in a reactive relationship to what is. You become deeper.

You already are, but then you know that you are deeper than what is. And you know yourself as the spaciousness around you. Around what is.

And the irritation no longer matters that much. It's a human energy formation. Nothing personal in it.

The personal nature goes out of emotions and saying me. There's a me in every emotion, a self in every emotion otherwise. It's my problem.

This emotion is mine. It's part of my story. And then you realize it's a human emotion.

Your fear is not much different from any other person's fear or anger or sadness or irritation. It is an energy turbulence or heaviness. So as you allow it, the self, the delusion of self goes out of it.

It's only through non-allowing that you strengthen the self nature of every feeling, every emotion and thought, every thought. There's a self in it. But then as you step back from the workings of the conditioned mind, you realize it's the human mind.

And even that, it's not personal. The self that was in every thought is recognized as the Buddha did as an illusion, an illusory entity. And that arises now is self-realization.

And it arises through seeing what you are not. Thoughts, emotions, events, sense perceptions. In other words, objects in consciousness.

Then there's no self there. The Buddhist doctrine, the Buddhist teaching of anatta, no self, of course. So who am I then?

Space, stillness, the ground, thoughtless, aware, presence. Oh, in the absence of a spiritual teaching, all you have as a teacher is life and the challenges of life. And what that is going to do to you sooner or later, it will take away objects that you have accumulated in your mind, in consciousness, and identified with as self, loss.

Loss of possessions, loss of recognition, loss of people close to you, loss of physical abilities as you grow old. Or if you're lucky, before you grow old, you encounter some kind of disaster in your life and you lose a lot all at once. Maybe your job, maybe your health at the same time and your possessions or someone close to you.

And it goes within a short space of time, it's all gone. Or objects have like dissolved in front of your eyes that were me, part of me. And that is traditionally, and before there were ever any spiritual teachers or teachings, a few human beings realized who they were through sudden and great loss.

When objects that they had identified within consciousness, content was removed from them. The opposite of what the self, the mind made self wanted and thought would get me to enlightenment, the opposite, because the mind made self thinks of enlightenment in terms of more, surely enlightenment is the greatest thing. So it thinks of it in terms of something that I can add to myself as the attainment.

And then suddenly life does something to you and the opposite happened, not more, but less. Life takes things away. Instead of giving you enlightenment, it takes away the little that you had or the lot that you had.

And so empty spaces appear where before there was something and it's being torn out of you by life. Sometimes violent events can happen. Life tears something from you, accidents, illness, some, whatever disaster, that's a powerful teacher.

And so as it tears something from you, the opposite of what the self had been planning, because it had been planning a good outcome to its story, I was planning a happy ending for my story and now this has happened. It's destroyed everything, the whole script. I

don't think I can put it back together again or I have to rewrite the whole thing.

And so suddenly empty spaces appear where before there was something, now there's nothing. Before there was recognition of you as somebody important, the world thought a lot of you, then you lose your position or your reputation through some scandal, maybe you did something silly and now everybody thinks you're nothing. They don't even talk about you anymore.

So that's an empty space, a content, a mental image is gone. It's not fat anymore, it can't sustain itself. And then you lose your house and then your wife leaves you and then somebody very close to you dies and then the stock market crashes.

And before you know it, there's mostly empty spaces where before there was something quite a lot. And now two things are possible, an even more fearful and angry and bitter and resentful self-contraction of the egoic entity that now quickly rewrites the story and gets identified with that. And then the story says, I'm the most miserable of all beings.

I have failed at everything. Life has treated me unfairly. And that becomes a new story, which is what you're telling yourself in the head or telling to others.

Before it looked like a great story, but now it's quickly rewritten so that you can identify with a new conceptualized sense of self. And that is a very bitter and resentful one and exists in a continuous state of contraction. But at least, you know who you are.

Instead of allowing the empty spaces, you quickly filled them up with new concepts. Now, this is of course an unhappy story, but it is far better to the self than no story at all that you can tell yourself and others. So it's all been in vain, 30 years of work, all for nothing.

They've all let me down. It's pointless. And then you have a lot to say about it.

And you have a new sense of self arising out of that. And then you die. But there's a potential on the other hand that you don't run away from the empty spaces and you may be so stunned by the empty spaces appearing suddenly that where before there was something, now there is nothing, that you just sit there, stunned and look.

And somehow you say, what can I do? It's all gone. And you may suddenly laugh and not realize, perhaps you don't have a word for it, that you have suddenly and spontaneously entered the surrendered state of consciousness.

And the space, all these empty spaces where before there was something through these holes in your life, space consciousness emerges. There was a BMW, now there's a hole. And through it comes, there was the big house, now there's nothing there.

It comes through there. There was the wife that was there, beautiful, attractive. You

could show her off to everybody and so feel bigger.

And now she left you for another man, betrayed you, let you down or whatever the story says. And now there's nothing, she's gone. And what comes through is space, unconditioned.

And suddenly you say, what's going on? I should be unhappy and I feel so peaceful. And you walk around in that state of amazement.

You sit on a park bench and no story is happening in your head anymore. Life is enough without a story of me. Going through life without a story except some memories, it's fine, without the heaviness of a conceptualized identity.

And you can notice the conceptualized identity at times wants to reassert itself. And then you simply step into now, use a bottle into now because the conceptualized identity functions only through thought and thought functions only through past and future. So there may be some of you here who have already experienced what I just talked about, life taking things away from you.

And so that the arising of that which is unconditioned through the openings is already happening. And if that hadn't happened to you, you wouldn't be here. You would be happy watching TV now.

You would be happy in your unhappiness of being asleep and identified with a story of me, which seemed to still be, it's still working, still hoping it's going to work out. And suddenly it's gone. So grace comes in many ways into your life, not only in ways that are usually easily recognized as grace, grace comes in ways that you would never call grace until you realize what it is.

There was a film made about the life of Ram Dass, the spiritual teacher who suffered a stroke. And the title of that film is Fierce Grace. Fierce is.

And so sometimes it happens that grace comes into your life in strange ways that only afterwards you recognize as grace, such as loss, great loss. And loss is grace. Death is grace because every loss is a form of death, loss of something that you had identified with as content of their mind, of me, that is a death.

And that is grace. And that is a mind calls it awful, dreadful, shouldn't be happening, but it happens all the time. Now, a spiritual teaching, when you realize how this transformation operates, then the spiritual teaching comes into your life and you are suddenly open to hear it.

And then grace operates in that way, much more gentle. Grace is here, but it's more gentle than the fierce grace. It's both grace.

Maybe you already had the fierce. Maybe you'll get the fierce as the last thing you need to enter the surrendered state. Maybe you don't need it anymore because as we sit here, that which other people lose through loss, we voluntarily lose here because we recognize that ultimately it's an illusion.

And that is also grace. And so, as it has been said in a holy book, die before you die. That's how it's translated.

Sometimes translate it also as find death before death finds you. Because death will find you, forms dissolve. And now here you are finding death before it finds you and realize only forms dissolve and there's that which is beyond birth and death.

Perhaps not even that, because that's already a mental formulation. It may be enough to realize the peace that is here now as you no longer oppose. This moment.

And that peace is beyond words. That spaciousness is beyond words and concepts, but it frees you from fear. It frees you from the illusory self.

And some humans have then said, I now know that there is no death. Well, it's one way of putting it. But no belief is required here.

So bring that yes to now, no matter what the now contains. It could not be otherwise. It's one with the totality, the form of this now.

Opposing it is madness. And then change happens out of that. This is good to know that no matter what happens to you, nothing can really stop you anymore because it's all as it should be.

Whatever condition arises is as it is. And the yes to it will take you into that deep peace that comes with realizing the spaciousness around phenomena. You can give attention to the sound, listen to the sound, and listen particularly to the point where the sound begins to dissolve.

And what's left is just the field of attention, the presence, the awareness. In some teachings, it's called the I am, that is listening. So we have an object in consciousness, the sound, and consciousness as the ground that remains.

And you can be aware both as you listen to the sound of the sound, and strangely enough, you can be aware of the awareness that is listening, the listening presence at the same time. And we could call that awareness of awareness. Not awareness of something in awareness, awareness of awareness, self-aware.

This is an enormous shift in consciousness. I am that, I am that. That is the one presence, the one fundamental identity of all things is the I am presence, the one consciousness.

And so we have the beautiful phrase in the Bible somewhere, when God defines him, her, itself as, I am that I am, I am that. So that's the end of believing that I am this, or I am that, because every this and that is the beginning of a story, is the beginning of identification with some kind of form. In other words, it's the beginning of the dream, the dream of form, the dream of me being that form.

And so you realize the essence of I am is never I am this or that, because this or that is always form. And it's a story that starts with a form. But simply the eternal I am presence, eternal means timeless.

There's no time in that consciousness, because it's not object consciousness. Time operates in the world of objects. There can be no world of objects without time.

Time has no existence as such, it's created by the mind in order to create a world of forms. You could not even imagine a world of form without time. So time is in the structure of the human mind to create a universe, to project that.

And that's fine on its own level. But if you're who you are gets caught up in that world of relativity and polarity, then that is a state of ignorance. Knowing God, I don't use that word very often, is knowing I am as the essence.

It's so simple. And that is the one thing that everybody knows that there's something so precious in me, and I don't want to lose that. The essence of one's identity that gets mixed up with a story, that gets mixed up with form, is presence, is awareness, is the I am.

After we have taken a little break, because the physical bodies need things like breaks, we will look at something that is a great opportunity obstacle for many people to the arising presence. And that is the human pain body and how the pain body also can become, one could say, a portal instead of being an obstacle. Pain body, as you know, is the accumulated past in every human being, racial past, personal past.

And there's a lot of heaviness in there. Another profound statement in the Bible that I quoted earlier, be still and know that I am God. Be still and know.

Be still means dwell in that state of no thought that is stillness and know. So in that state of no thought, in that stillness, there is a deep knowing that I am God. I am presence is one with the one.

So in that little pointer, we have each word basically means the same. It's about being, be stillness, knowing, the knowing that is beyond mind, beyond concepts. I am God, not as a new form identity, of course.

So we are coming to know the meaning of consciousness without thought. To be awake means to be in the state of consciousness without thought. Not to be identified with

thought is to be awake.

Portal into that state, we have seen listening to silence, acceptance of now as a portal into that state. And of course, the inner body is also a portal into that state, sensing the aliveness that is throughout your body. Now, at first, it may appear that is an object that arises in your awareness.

And at first, that may be the case because you feel certain energy movements, perhaps. As you go deeper, you realize there's vast spaciousness in here. And you realize the spaciousness that is in here, that is alive, but spacious, is one with who you are.

So although at first, it may appear that when we speak of body awareness, as if the body were an object that arises in your consciousness, as you go deeper in, you realize the space of consciousness that is the essence of what appears temporarily as a physical body. So the body also can become a doorway, a portal into space consciousness. And then that aliveness, that spacious aliveness as you go through this portal is suddenly everywhere.

It's not confined anymore to the space of this body. But the entry point is into attention moving into a body. And so as we sit here, we can have a generalized sense of aware presence or awareness is throughout the body.

We're sensing the aliveness that is in every cell. Very subtle at first, it's not just in the background. It's also a beautiful anchor for presence.

You may at times want to close your eyes and go very deep into that inner body so that you then lose the mental image of the form of the body. And then no longer different parts of the body, but just a one generalized sense of spacious presence. And that is beautiful.

It quickly takes you out of the story in the head into the power of now. And this portal of the inner body is of course a way of contacting, of not just contacting, but realizing the intelligence that is there in that spaciousness of the body. That intelligence that was already greater than the human mind.

Intelligence that operates temporarily as a physical body. Enormous from the point of view of mind, enormously complex, but it operates noiselessly, beautifully, with no thinking involved. Intelligence.

So it has been said in a holy book somewhere, God is closer to you than hands and feet. Or it's been said in the Quran, God is closer to you than your jugular vein, which is up here somewhere. One of the main veins in the body.

Closer to you than hands and feet, closer. What does that, what's closer than hands and feet? So that God means God must be very close to me.

And so if God, he, she, it is closer than hands and feet, must be even deeper than that, than hands and feet are out here. So it's inside that. And for thousands of years, humans have looked for God through thought, mental abstraction.

And for a long time, thought it's out there somewhere. And then one early astronomer who looked, used one of the first people to use a telescope, said, I've looked everywhere and I haven't seen God anywhere. Well, good, that's the beginning of the end of an illusion.

So this is a portal that is always there because the body, wherever you go, the body goes with you. Shifting attention from noise-making in the head. Vroom, vroom, vroom, vroom, vroom.

And then you notice it because it brings about, very quickly makes you suffer one way or another. And then you notice it. And when the moment you notice that basically you've lost the now, and so you suffer, that noticing is the arising of presence.

But that can be obscured immediately after you notice it by the mind again, which then judges the noticing and says, you see, you can't do it. And it says, oh, I can't be present now, not now. I have no time for the now.

Tomorrow, I'll look into the, look at the now again. And then, but first I have to sort all these things out, the, which are more important than now. So often you will find a thought telling you, you can't be in the body now.

It's just too much on my mind. And then you recognize that as a thought without believing in it. It's a thought because thought has a momentum and it wants to keep going.

And it will bring up other thoughts to justify that you should be giving your complete attention to thought. Every thought could be considered a little entity, a form, a life form with a short lifespan, but it's there and the entity wants to proliferate and grow and remain in its form. So the mind can be considered an entity too in itself, an energy field, an energy form, and it wants to stay in control.

It wants, doesn't want to make room. So it will bring up thoughts that tell you that, no, you can't do it now. This is too much.

Just, and then you recognize the thought and then you say, there's a thought that I can't do it. And then you move your attention into the body. Oh, and you might feel the pull of thought wanting your attention back up in the head.

And you just, there's no struggle. You can't struggle with the mind. You can just gently hold attention in the body.

If only, even the hands is enough as an anchor because then some of your attention moves into the body and even sensing the aliveness that is in your hands when the mind is extremely restless and maybe you cannot feel immediately any other part of the body. Just that is the beginning of the doorway, the portal. You're touching it as you go into hands and then simply holding the feeling of hand, sensing that.

So some of your attention is here and the mind is slightly less active. It hasn't got all your attention anymore. Now the mind will pretend, every thought pretends that it is, it matters.

And you must believe me. Every thought wants to matter, to be important. And you have to believe it.

Thought about yourself, your relationship with your partner, thought about your partner, thought about... And you're in it every... And so to realize that at any time you can shift your attention from the stream of thought into presence and a good doorway is the body and one of the portals.

It's... And simply holding attention in your hands helps. And then attention gradually moves more into the body because you sense this is so alive.

You may come across people in your daily life, maybe parents, friends, relatives, who are not yet ready to listen to the teaching of presence or acceptance of now. But many people are ready for this, such simple truth of sensing the body. And you can tell your father or grandfather or grandmother or uncle who is tortured by his mind.

Can't get out, has been telling the same stories for the past 30 years. And you can tell them, can you feel your hands? What?

It's... And then the very, just point out there's a possibility that you can feel an aliveness in the body. Just try it.

No, I can't feel a thing. I mean, leave me alone with that. You just try.

And they say, no, I can't feel anything. You can explain that the body contains intelligence. Most people can see that if you say that they couldn't control the functions of the body with their mind.

So there must be some other intelligence at work. And then say, close your eyes, hold your right or left hand like this. Is there any way you can find out whether your right hand is still there or not without opening your eyes, without touching anything?

Can you know whether this hand is still there or not? You can ask. And if they do it, after a little while, they'd say, well, yes, I can feel it.

It's still there. So, there it is. So that question can take their attention because if you only

say move your attention into the body, they may not be able to do it if they have lived their whole life in the head.

But that little question, is there any way you can find out, how can you know whether your right hand is still there if you close your eyes and don't touch anything and don't move it, and suddenly they feel it? Oh, yes. So, this could be the beginning of something for somebody who is not yet ready for anything else.

At least they can begin to move some and then feel the benefit of that. Okay, the portal is opening up. That portal is beginning to open.

That's good. And then for yourself to have some attention in here so that the mind doesn't create stories again. While you go, while you travel on a bus, dwell in the energy field of body and watch the landscape go past you, the cityscape go past you, and simultaneously have attention in the inner energy field of body.

And there is the state that we pointed to earlier in which you are able to perceive without needing to label it because you have an anchor now for staying present. So you are not at the mercy of the conditioned mind which labels things compulsively. So this is the anchor.

And so you can then perceive with that freshness, newness, and aliveness that is there when you are not interpreting or labeling that which you are perceiving. So you sense the body at this very moment. You can sense a little bit of the subtleness, the energy field, the energy in the inner body, and hear the words and be aware of the totality of the room without needing to label because your attention is not exclusively in thought anymore.

It's moved out of mind. And so to use that anchor also in nature, it may be helpful, sit somewhere on the beach, on a stone, on a bench, enter the body, and then look and then listen. Oh, it's so easy now to listen without the interference of thought and to be in that alertness.

So whenever you feel overwhelmed by mind, a quick way is shifting attention into the inner body. And don't believe the thought that tells you that you can't do it, at least not now. One could say you have the choice now to be present.

That's an enormous choice. You have the choice to be identified with mind. It doesn't look like a choice because the mind pulls you in.

So you have the choice to step out of that and be present. You only have that choice ultimately because the totality with which you are intrinsically connected is moving through you. Presence is arising through you.

But from the point of view of this entity, from that perspective, and everything I say,

every language, every thought is only a perspective. From that perspective, one could say that you have a choice now to be present. Ultimately, the only reason why you have a choice is that the evolutionary impulse of the universe is moving through you.

From the limited perspective of an entity, it seems that you have a choice, and it's a good perspective. I have a choice now, I can choose presence. How is it that you can choose presence?

Because it's happening. Ultimately, it's not you choosing. So this is a deeper perspective.

You don't have a choice, presence is emerging. But as a temporary limited perspective, it's helpful to say, I have a choice. That's part of the emerging presence is to see that you have a choice, and later you can let go of that perspective.

Because some of you have read certain teachings that say you have no choice, there's nothing you can do. Go home. It either happens or it doesn't happen.

So that's one kind of teaching. And that's one perspective, it has an element of truth also, but it's not the entire truth. No statement or perspective has the entire truth.

Another teaching says, unless you want liberation or enlightenment with the same urgency that a drowning person wants air, you won't get it. So which one am I going to believe? And they both seem reputable teachers.

So is one of them wrong and the other one is right? Or are they just different perspectives? And how can they ever be reconciled?

Where does the urgency come from with which I want liberation? It's all the one moving through you, but you can adopt different perspectives. Wanting liberation is good.

Wanting liberation in the future won't get you there. So if you shift the wanting liberation from future, a movement into future, into now, wanting liberation now, then it works. And if you want liberation now, you realize there's nothing you can do beyond what already is.

Okay, okay, let's see. If that impulse of wanting freedom, which usually seeks future, wanting implies you want something through future. If you see the fallacy of that, but don't go to the other polarity and say, okay, I've had it.

I'm going home and watch every soap opera that there is, and I'm going to drink beer because there's nothing I can do anyway. No, the wanting that moves into future, can you move that wanting into now, that urgency, that seeking? How can you seek in the now without future?

You can, there can be an intensity with which you face what is. So the seeking becomes an intensity of presence. And you meet the now with that intensity of alert presence.

Before that intensity became a mind movement of seeking, but now that intensity becomes the presence. And here's the now. And you embrace that in the field of presence and uncompromising yes to what is.

Now that now you've brought, and then the saying, the teacher that said, there's nothing you can do was also right because this is what is. Let's stop it here. It's hard to reconcile seemingly opposite perspectives, but this was a little attempt to reconcile that there's nothing you can do is true.

There's something you can do is also true. Neither contains the entire truth. And it's happening now.

So it's good whenever you are waiting somewhere, I mentioned that in the book, because it's amazing how much time people spend waiting for things in daily life. You're waiting on the phone. You're waiting on the computer.

You're waiting at the bank. You're waiting at the post office, at the bus stop, at the traffic light. So much waiting.

And most people are restless and uneasy and wanting to needing to get to the future. And then there's the waiting for some bigger event to happen in your life, making it one day, they will recognize me. And that could be a long wait.

So you have all these short waits and then you have the long waits. Let's just talk about the short waits. How, when you're waiting, you can bring, connect with the inner body.

At any moment when there's nothing else you can do, you might as well sense the aliveness that is here now. Use that portal, no matter where, traffic light, telephone, post office. Hold the line, please, they say.

And 10 minutes later, you're still there. And you could be in here. It doesn't really, it's only the mind that tells you, oh, you're wasting time.

You have to sit somewhere. So you might as well sit here. And you have to hold your hand in some position.

You might as well hold the phone. It doesn't really matter. Wherever you go, you'll be sitting or standing somewhere and moving in some way.

Is the next moment going to be so much greater than this one? At the airport, flight is delayed by three hours. Oh my, no, not again.

Well, does it matter whether you sit on this chair there or whether you sit on the plane or whether when you arrive home, you sit in another chair? There isn't that much more in phenomenal universe. It's what you can do with this body is limited.

And then at times when you think this is great, presence is arising, freedom is here. Suddenly you get overtaken by this incredible heaviness or turbulence. A little trigger did it and you're totally back in mind and heavy emotions that go with it.

And the energy field that you are shifts so that some people hardly recognize you. So great is the shift. Pain body, the accumulation of past emotional pain, human pain, going back a million years, personal pain to add to the pain that's already there in every human being for the simple reason that you are a human being on this planet, living in the collective human unconsciousness that has created so much suffering already for itself.

So you carry that, some of that suffering as an emotional field of pain with you. And then when you're at childhood, you absorb more of it through the suffering of the child from parents. So there's this emotional field, an entity, temporary being that lives in you that is the pain body.

Contracted life energy, can't flow anymore. An aspect of the egoic entity, the me. And sometimes it's not there, you can't feel it.

It's there, but it's dormant. It can't remain dormant for too long because it needs to feed. It needs more pain to feed on.

And that's what it recognizes, that kind of emotional pain, it loves that. It doesn't know anything else. So I'm offering you a perspective on something that is very real, not ultimately real, but relatively real in you.

And to say that it is like an entity that has its own little intelligence is quite close to the truth, not the absolute truth. It is not an enemy. There's nothing ultimately that's an enemy and that is not you.

It is life energy. And the only reason why it's painful is it's stagnant under pressure. Turbulent or heavy.

And through the egoic delusions, the me with its constant dissatisfaction and lack and future projections and not enough, that it's been over many thousands of years it's come into being in humans. And then added to through the enormous suffering that humans have inflicted on other humans that increased it and the torture, the rapes, killings, warfare almost continues in human history. So humans have been through a lot.

If humanity were one single being, you would say he or she has been through a lot. He's been through madness. Well, hardly, just beginning you come out of it and inflicted so much pain, suffered so much.

And that's in every human being. Sometimes the pain body is dormant. You can hardly feel it, not feel it at all.

And when it needs to feed again a little trigger which could be just a thought in your head that you totally believe in about yourself, about your relationship, about your position in the world. One little thought arises. You don't recognize it as a little thought and you believe in it completely and the pain body is ready to awaken.

It will link into that thought and suddenly it will come to life. It will awaken and through that thought that's linked into move into your mind or it will use a reaction. A little thing goes wrong in your life.

They keep you waiting for too long on the phone or whatever it is. But the pain body was ready to awaken and suddenly you get an enormous influx of turbulence, anger or deep sadness, whatever the energy field of your pain body, the predominant energy field is. And then the pain body has awakened and it will be feeding on your thought processes to start with.

And they will reflect the energy field of the pain body because the pain body can only feed on painful thoughts. And at that moment, then you are totally identified, your sense of self, of me, the story of me, is totally identified with that movement of pain. Totally identified with the thoughts that are being created by the pain body and are feeding the pain body, a vicious circle.

The old pain in you creates those thoughts. They're all total misinterpretations. They have perhaps a limited truth to them, but they are totally a total distortion of the truth, which is far beyond that.

But every thought is totally believed in and the emotion that comes with the thoughts is the pain body and it's feeding on the thoughts and getting bigger. The more you think about yourself or your life situation, the more it feeds. And you sit there in that heaviness of turbulence.

And then you're waiting for somebody close to you to come and feed the pain body externally to give you a reaction of pain so that you can feed on your partner's or somebody else's reaction, pushing the buttons. And you get the feedback of emotional pain. Drama, I love it, give me more drama.

This is the heaviness of it. It could be the drama of anger or it could be the drama of great heaviness. And the pain body is feeding and it works it uses your environment, at work it might do it.

It's looking for pain. So beware when there are walking pain bodies around and at any given time in the population, the people who are walking around the streets or driving cars, probably one can say 10% of those people are in the middle of pain body attack at any given time. And they are dangerous because they want something bad to happen.

They don't know it. They don't say that. They don't say, I want something bad to happen

but they're looking for trouble.

And we all meet people like that in that state. They are looking for something bad to happen and they are looking at you, challenging you to give them some bad feedback or the driver is looking for the accident. Great many of accidents that happen in traffic are caused by driving pain bodies.

They are looking for the next bad thing. And the obvious next bad thing when you're driving is an accident. Particularly good when two pain, driving pain bodies meet then the likelihood is very high that the accident will happen.

And then they can create even more pain. There's a recent phenomenon in, I don't know if it's the same here, called road rage where after the accident, it's not enough for the pain bodies to have caused the accident and feel bad about it. After the accident, they jump out of their cars and beat each other up to feel even worse, even kill, some killed others.

So violence becomes possible in very unconscious people and there are still many around when they are in the middle of a pain body attack. There are certain situations where the pain body is more likely to arise because there's very little consciousness in you at those times, getting drunk, for example. Males particularly are prone to becoming violent more in certain cultures than in others when they drink.

After a few drinks, they're looking for, and they find something. I mentioned in the book for women, menstruation is a time when the collective female pain body tends to come up because there is a strong collective aspect to each person's pain body. There's a collective male pain body, there's a collective female pain body and women have suffered tremendously as women for thousands of years.

The cultures have been patriarchal and women have been subservient to men and used in many cultures almost like slaves. So there is a strong female pain body that arose through the suffering of women that tends to arise at the time of menstruation and just before, and a woman can observe it. At that time and bring more suddenly, how do you get beyond pain body, that vicious circle?

Simply know that it is there, bring presence to it, bring, sense it, feel it, there it is. Look at it, aware, give it some attention and what else can you do except to say, there it is. But when you watch it, as it arises in you, it cannot use your mind and become an even more unhappy story, more unhappy than even it is unhappy enough without the pain body, the story of me.

But when the pain body comes, the story of me becomes dreadful, an awful drama or tragedy, it's a very self-destructive story. So the pain body doesn't feed anymore on your thinking when you're able to bring attention to it, recognize it and allow it to be the

heaviness or the turbulence so that it doesn't turn into the illusory self. And that is the primary challenge of all those who are now going through this transformation of consciousness.

Their primary challenge is not to lose themselves again in the pain body each time it comes because it has enormous momentum. Enormous momentum is contained in that and alertness is required so that you can recognize it when it comes. Especially if you can recognize it in its early stages, just as it begins to come up as a reaction, as a thought, and you feel the heaviness descending or the turbulence coming up, thinking, hmm, there it is.

Or you may recognize it next time, even in the middle of it, it can happen as presence is arising when you're reenacting the weekly drama with your partner to suddenly in the middle of it, wake up. And you suddenly realize we are acting it out again and to sense the turbulence of it. Wow, this feels very agitated, very turbulent.

Wow, there's the pain body, wow, it's interesting. What do you do with it? You can't get rid of it just like that.

It is, there it is, there's the human pain body. You allow it to be. It's a strange thing to allow the pain body to be.

And then the pain body is not a self anymore. It doesn't become a self, an unhappy self. All that's left of it is turbulence or heaviness or tightness, fear, anger, sadness, depression, whatever form, maybe there's one out there.

Yeah. So you will find pain body in yourself and you will see it more easily in others. And it's the challenge, it's your challenge to recognize it.

It's really all that's needed is to recognize it. Don't have to do anything beyond that, but to see it for what it is, just the seeing. The seeing implies that you've just let it be.

You can't see it without letting it be. There it is, all that's ultimately needed is to see it and say, there it is. And then continue to watch that.

Then it cannot feed anymore on your thoughts. It doesn't become a self. All that's left is, it's almost a physical thing now.

It's emotional, but it has a very strong physical component. It changes the chemistry of your body. If you could examine the inner chemistry of your body, you would see the changes in the body chemistry that happen every time pain body arises in you.

Color of the stomach lining changes to red. Innumerable changes in circulation, how the organs function. You could examine all that.

So it has a very strong physical component. It is almost reduced to a physical symptom

when you watch it, emotional, half emotional, half physical. But the main thing is it's no longer an entity, a me.

You don't mistake it anymore. And then it's not, the energy then gradually becomes transmuted. It becomes freed from its stuckness.

It cannot, it couldn't flow anymore. But by allowing it, it begins to flow. And again, the energy that was contained in here.

Wow. And it's very often people with heavy pain bodies have the greatest motivation to become free because they just can't stand it anymore. Again and again.

I was such a person who had such a heavy pain body that one night when it came up very strongly again, I couldn't live with myself anymore. No, myself was the pain body. And the mind-made story energized by the pain body, heavy, intolerable, I can't live with myself.

I didn't know at the time that that wasn't myself. But the sentence arose in my mind, I cannot live with myself any longer. Can't live with myself any longer.

It's just too much. And then there was a stepping back from that thought. And I looked at the structure of the thought.

I cannot live with myself. Am I one or two? Am I two?

This sentence seems to imply that I'm two. I and the self that I cannot live with. Who is the self and who am I?

This could be a question that a Zen master might ask you. Who is the self and who are you? It's a koan, but it could be.

This koan arose spontaneously. It didn't have an answer. Koans don't have real answers, not on the mind level.

They just stop your mind. And at that strange moment, I, and this is the whole essence of the teaching now, what happened that night. I didn't understand it at all until years later.

I separated itself from the self, including the pain body. I, the sense of presence, consciousness, had become mixed with form, thought forms and emotional forms, the bundle of me. And suddenly, because it became so painful, I withdrew from identification with thoughts and emotions and remained in the state of the simple I am presence.

And I am is never unhappy. Only the self is unhappy. I am is free always.

So it came out and then the self was no longer being sustained by identification with it

and it collapsed proper. And what was left was I am. And the next morning, I am said, how can I be so peaceful?

What happened? Something happened, but I don't know what. Just peace, wherever I go, there's peace.

In the middle of the noisy traffic in the city, that's peaceful, everything is so peaceful. What happened? No idea.

I didn't know until years later that the self and the pain body had self-destructed. And this is relatively rare, I realized later. For most humans, the process is a little bit more gradual.

It's a gradual disidentification from the story, the mind made self and the energy field of pain body. You're stepping out, you're drawn back in. Step out, get drawn back in.

And gradually, presence arises more and more. But that was just amazing to see how the story of me evaporated. And then I didn't realize either that the peace was there because there wasn't all that much thinking anymore.

Because without the story of me, there isn't that much to think about. And suddenly, everything was so alive, which of course it always is. It was no longer obscured by the veil of conceptualization and labeling, aliveness everywhere, peace.

And so that's, then this is the universal process of recognition. The pain that is old pain is human pain. Nothing personal, not an identity.

Just pain. So all that's required is to see it when it arises instead of being it, that is the illusion. Because then it's, I am that pain.

I am that story that's associated with that pain. I am very heavy. I am very unhappy.

And so there's the simple seeing. Then I am doesn't get mixed up with that. So that is our task, is to be there as the witness of the pain body, one could say, and let it be.

And at first you won't sense that there's a lot of space around it because pain body at first seems it occupies everything. They can be so heavy that they seem to, that they occupy your entire being and they seem to, that heaviness seems to color all your sense perceptions and all your thoughts and the entire world seems to be heavy with it. And so you allow it to be and at first there's just a little bit of space around it suddenly.

And then it suddenly there's a bit more space around it. And the more you allow it to be, the greater the spaciousness around it. And then it seems the pain body seems to shrink.

It does shrink, but also it shrinks because you have a different perspective on it. And then the space is so much faster than that. This is the process of transformation.

So also not making an identity out of the pain body for other human beings. Because as you go through life, very often you encounter humans that are in the grip of pain body and you will probably recognize it more easily now. If you know people well, you can see the shift that comes over them as the pain body takes them over immediately as the entire energy field changes.

And this has been a shock for many people who got married. These days it happens less, but in the past, many people got married without ever living together first. So they would get married and then start living together.

And so after getting married, you would certainly meet your partner's pain body. It can be a dreadful shock because of course you didn't know what it was. You just thought this was the person I married, the beautiful angel or Mr. Right and suddenly turns into this monster. Is he now showing his real face? Is she, is that her real self that she's been hiding from me? And so it can easily be misinterpreted and it's let, it's spoiled many honeymoons because it hasn't been recognized as the pain body.

It's not, oh, I made a dreadful mistake marrying that person. Of course, the truth is whoever you marry will have a pain body unless they're already free and there are not yet many that are free. Freedom is secondary from pain body.

The question is whether they are totally identified with it or not. As presence comes through you into the relationship, that will affect the other person also. If you can talk about the pain body when you're not being possessed by it in times of consciousness, talk about your last pain body attack and the drama that came out of it.

When was it? Oh yes, the day before yesterday. Where did it start?

How did it start? What triggered it? What did you first feel?

What did I first feel? And then what? And then we started shouting at each other and then we were totally in it.

Isn't that interesting? And three hours later, we finally came out of it. Three days later, who knows?

And so you can sometimes, I very rarely say think about the past, but in this instance, it occasionally can be helpful just to briefly relive a past pain body episode and as you relive it, bring presence into it and watch what happened. If you watch what happened, it will be easier to watch what happens when it happens again. Then you can watch it then as you watch it.

It's a little bit easier, much easier in fact, to watch a past pain body attack because you have a distance, it's only a memory, but even then it can happen as you start to remember it, it's happening again. So if you bring your attention back with your partner

and say, let's look at the last pain body drama that we went through, and if you're not alert, it can happen that reliving it can activate it again and before long, you're shouting at each other again. No, it didn't start in me, it started in you.

You were the first to say, no, it didn't. And then perhaps in the middle of that, you suddenly wake up. When you wake up, it's the most beautiful thing that could happen is to wake up in the middle of a pain body attack and suddenly laugh or smile.

That's the beginning of liberation and it's really happening. Wow. And there are couples now who are, to whom this is happening.

If you don't yet wake up in the middle of it, you wake up just afterwards. Oh, there it was again. If your partner doesn't want to hear about pain body, then what can you do?

If you say, let's talk about pain body and he says, I don't want to hear about pain body. You do your own thing, I do my thing. And so all you can do is stay present when his or her pain body comes up.

And it wants you to be unhappy too. That's what pain bodies do. And it'll do everything it can to make you unhappy.

And finally get a reaction. So it's, you have to be really present. And then if one partner stays conscious, it cannot not affect the other.

Or in frustration, the other is going to leave you. And the frustration is that the pain body is not being fed enough, living with you. And so the pain body says, okay, I'm going to look for somewhere else for pain because this is not feeding me.

It also happens that people feel strongly attracted to each other because their pain bodies are mutually compatible. And sometimes this is the basis of certain relationships. It's unconscious, of course.

So there's, they are acting out what they have to act out and it works perfectly. And that strong, compelling pull towards another person, that is sometimes called falling in love, that enormous pull towards another person is sometimes, or has a strong element quite often, also of a pain body that recognizes a compatible pain body. And pain body can get mixed up with sexuality also, of only feeling sexually excited with somebody who is going to cause you some pain.

Doesn't have to be physical necessarily, but some kind of the drama involved, that pain in the drama that can give you the stimulus. And again, if that's the case, just watching it is helpful, it's enough. If that is, and this happens more often than humans realize.

And some humans are condemned to repeating the same cycle unconsciously. They say, this time I want a husband who is kind and helpful and gentle and compassionate, not

that jerk that I had last time. And so you go and then you think you find the one and you start living together and suddenly the same jerk comes out again.

And you thought he was gentle and compassionate, but you got attracted to his pain body and it comes out, it's suddenly the same thing again. That was the attraction. That is described, there was some years ago, there was a very popular book.

It didn't mention pain body as such, but it mentioned from the perspective of women, women who love too much was the title, how unconsciously through being forced to act out certain conditioned patterns continuously choose the wrong man. And it happens to men also, of course. So this is very interesting to watch in oneself, in one's relationship.

Pain bodies with children, children have pain bodies also. Children also suffer from pain body attacks. In most children do.

If you're a parent, you will then recognize when the child is suddenly totally taken over by his or her pain body. Whatever the child does, withdraws completely, has a screaming fit, throws him or herself on the floor, or throws things, is transformed in one moment from an angel into a monster. And many parents have witnessed that in their children, say, what is going on here?

They don't realize it happens to them also, maybe a little bit more disguised. It's the human pain body in the child. And so a parent can simply point out to the child afterwards, not in the middle, except later on, but at first, not in the middle of it.

Afterwards, what was that? What did it feel like? Wasn't that strange?

When did you first feel it? Does it have a name? Temporary name or only temporary?

Oh, it's called the green monster. Okay. Okay.

And so occasionally it comes and gets hold of you. Yeah. Okay.

Two days later, the pain body, you can watch it. Oh, is the green monster coming? There it is.

And then of course the pain body will already be in the child and the pain body will always deny itself. And you just say, no, I'm not the green monster. Your partner would do the same.

If you said to your partner, is that your pain body? He or she will throw something at you and deny it. The pain body will never admit that it's the, oh yes, I am the pain body.

So this is the work of, you help children. If they teach at school that pain bodies happen, that people have pain bodies and that you can actually watch it, that would be an enormous thing to tell. Even a five-year-old will understand because it's so simple.

It's so obvious. There it is. And then presence can arise.

That's it. So we are, the pain body is, seems an obstacle, but it's the greatest incentive for becoming free. And it's almost as if the energy that is contained in there, then becomes the fuel for consciousness, becomes the fuel for presence, becomes transmuted and is transmuted into presence.

And so it often is that people with very heavy pain bodies quickly go beyond, disidentify from. People with moderate pain bodies, they can live with themselves. They have found an arrangement of living with themselves.

Periodically, yes, they get unhappy, but it's okay, I can manage. But if you're very heavy, you get so fed up with yourself that you will want to be free. In Eastern terms, one could say pain body is karma because it's the accumulated, is an aspect of karma, is the accumulated past in you, the conditioned past in you, which you identify as yourself.

That is karma. To identify with a conditioned past in me as myself is acting out karma. And the acting out of karma is the renewing of karma.

Action, reaction, that's the meaning of karma. Action, reaction, it's a vicious circle. You're being forced to act out your conditioning.

And a large part of your conditioning is the human collective conditioning. So that's the action of karma. And karma, you can't really get to the end of karma through time.

You can't really say, okay, if I wait long enough, finally, I will come to the end of karma. No, because it renews itself. It's to the end of karma is not through time, but through accessing the power of now.

Then you come to the end of action, reaction. So it's only in the now that karma dissolves through accessing the power that is inherent here in this presence. Wonderful.

Many of you would not be here if it weren't for your pain bodies. Already you've created so much trouble and suffering for yourself that you had to wake up, just as I did. So you're waking up.

When we have these gatherings, time passes very quickly, it's strange. And so it's happened again. It's only been one moment, that's why it passed so quickly.

There may be some questions in your minds, but the clock tells us that we need to stop. Now, what about these questions? Is there any question that is truly critical that you need to know the answer to?

There can be no presence unless you know the answer to this question. And you cannot let surrender to what is unless you know the answer. No, there isn't.

We don't need any questions.

[Speaker 6] (3:14:30 - 3:15:01)

When I had been in my darkest moment, I happened to read The Power of Now. What Eckhart Tolle had to say about happiness had been the impetus to go on this journey. I was in Vancouver to meet him.

You were there on a park bench for two years. And you were there with your wife, And you slept on the park bench?

[Speaker 1] (3:15:02 - 3:15:09)

Rarely, but I did spend most of the days on park benches in parks, different parks in London.

[Speaker 6] (3:15:12 - 3:15:14)

Did you eat three meals a day?

[Speaker 1] (3:15:14 - 3:17:49)

No, no. One meal a day if I was lucky. As you sit here, is it possible for you to simply watch what's happening around you without adding any interpretation to it?

To just be present with what is, and you get a taste of what it's like to be on a park bench with nothing further needing to be added to this moment. The sounds, sights, people, sound of the water, the light, just allow it to be as it is. With that comes peace.

You don't get continuously drawn into events and thoughts and emotions and reactions. You are the wider space in which all these things happen. You are the awareness behind it without which none of this would be here.

To just be atoms and molecules in space. You are the awareness that enables this entire world to be. And so knowing that that is who you truly are, not through a concept but through the actual realization of stepping back and allowing the phenomenal world to be as it is at this moment.

Allowing this moment to be as it is. That takes you deeper into yourself. And you may notice there's a certain peace in the background that happens.

An alertness is required for this. You need to stay alert to what is. To sense perceptions and the energy behind sense perceptions which is the consciousness.

The alertness is there. Without the alertness you will drift off into thinking. And then you think about the next what's going to happen to me tomorrow.

There is a place for making plans but not right here on the park bench. This isn't the place for thinking about tomorrow because you miss all this beauty and aliveness around you.

[Speaker 7] (3:17:52 - 3:17:55)

And then you're cold. You don't even think about it as a cold.

[Speaker 1] (3:17:56 - 3:23:23)

No, it just is. The sensation of it. You don't even need to call it cold.

And then that's okay too. The reactivity goes out of life. Always against something, wanting to clutch at something.

What about the search for meaning? Now you notice that just a moment ago you were in that state of alert presence. And it never takes long for another thought to come in and ask a question.

Because thought cannot tolerate the state of presence. So it will always come in and say, yeah but what about, I don't quite understand yet. Can you tell me what does it all mean?

Thought wants to add something. It wants to control in some way by understanding what this all means. Now, if you can let go, just for a moment, not for the rest of your life.

Just for this moment, let go of the need to understand anything. So that you're truly present in this moment. So you don't need to do it for the next hour or the next ten minutes.

Just right now. Just what is. But don't forget yourself because you are the consciousness behind it.

You are the space. The presence. Can you feel that your body is alive?

So stay with that feeling and then perceive. It's easier to perceive without interpretation when you can feel that your body is alive. You feel the inner aliveness throughout your body.

So some attention, some of your attention is there. The rest is on the outside world. That roots you in the present moment.

It anchors you in the present moment. And if a thought comes into your mind, you can watch that also. Just the same way as you watch a dog walking past, you can watch a thought arising in your mind and you don't have to follow it to where it wants to go.

So you simply watch the thought that arises in your mind and let it go in the same way

that the dog walks past you. Or if you choose to, you can follow the thought and then you can say, I just thought of another question. You can do that too.

But to see the possibility that also in the same way that you observe the outer world, here as you sit on the bench, you can also observe the inner world, the world of thoughts and emotions. Thoughts want to arise continuously and that's fine, that's what they do. But there's no need to get drawn into each thought that arises and immediately go with it to where it wants to go.

Otherwise you're always following every thought. Like a dog following the scent. Does it matter which?

No, it doesn't matter. You can experiment. You can experiment with thoughts.

You can follow some thoughts and you can watch other thoughts. You find out for yourself. You can play.

You can see that you are bigger than your thoughts. You don't have to be dominated by your thoughts because thoughts create lots of problems too. Unnecessary problems.

And they can obscure the aliveness of life at this moment. There are many people walking around here who are thinking about other things. They're thinking about the next one.

They're thinking about tomorrow. But this is not the place for that. There is a place for planning and thinking about tomorrow.

But why spoil the beauty of this and the aliveness of this? We're thinking about the next moment. Is that going to be better than this one?

This is it. It's not going to get that much better. What could be more beautiful than this?

It's the awakening of something within you that is deeper than thought. That's really the main thing. And that's already there.

You just didn't know it.

[Speaker 6] (3:23:25 - 3:23:27)

Why didn't I know this?

[Speaker 1] (3:23:28 - 3:23:54)

It's a deep-seated habit of being totally identified with thinking. It's the human condition, which could be described as lost in thought. Because up to now, evolution has been unconscious.

It was automatic. But now evolution is consciously chosen by a species, and that's a revolutionary thing. And you are part of that.

[Speaker 6] (3:24:03 - 3:24:04)

I can still make movies.

[Speaker 1] (3:24:04 - 3:24:05)

I can still have a girlfriend.

[Speaker 6] (3:24:05 - 3:24:06)

Oh, yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:24:06 - 3:24:07)

Even if I'm conscious.

[Speaker 6] (3:24:07 - 3:24:08)

Yes, it's beautiful.

[Speaker 1] (3:24:09 - 3:30:25)

It's a playground. You play around with the world. You take action.

You relate. But you're not lost in it. Most humans are lost in it.

What about pain? Physical pain or emotional pain of losing someone? Most of the human pain is psychologically created.

There's an enormous amount of psychological pain. Suffering, I call that. When suffering goes and there's a possibility for humans now to live without suffering, that is a possibility, there may still be some physical pain.

It may be that you get toothaches or bodily pains from time to time. Suffering is another level that lies on top of the pain. Suffering implies a story, a little me that is unhappy, a mentally constructed entity, a little me that has an unhappy story that is its identity.

And that creates an enormous amount of suffering. Not only do you make yourself suffer, you make people around you suffer. To be at one with life is to be at one with the present moment because that's the only place where life can be found.

You cannot leave the space of now that stays with you, whatever you do and wherever you go. Your life has never been not now and will never be not now. Are you making the present moment into an enemy in some way internally through thinking about something that's nothing to do with now?

I need to figure something out. Well, first of all, be here fully. And then whatever is needed in your life comes.

It comes out of the power that dwells in the present moment that most people overlook. There's an enormous power here, which is the power of life itself. And most people look for something and ignore this.

And the power of life itself is inseparable from who you are in the depth of your being. Many times you will forget. But the moment you realize that you forgot, there's a possibility of saying, ah, yes, I lost the present moment.

And there's a possibility of choosing to reenter the present moment. The first thing that happens when you reenter the present moment, you become more aware of sense perceptions. There's a greater alertness.

And then you become more aware of the aliveness in your body. You feel the life within. It's like the entire vibrational frequency of your body shifts when you become present.

It's a different state of consciousness. Ah, more alert, more alive. And many times you will lose it.

And then you'll remember. Ah, that's good enough. Now, they don't believe the mind when it tells you, oh, you can't do it now.

You've got too much on your mind. You can't be bothered with the present moment. Those are just thoughts.

There's no need for you to follow those thoughts. Just watch them. They are thoughts that the mind throws up.

You don't need to believe in them because they're not true. When the mind tells you, you can't be present now because you've got too much on your mind, then, okay, you can say, okay, let's see if that's true. Then you feel, there's an aliveness in my hand.

There's an aliveness in my body. There's beauty all around. And you become present again.

Alertness, the alertness returns. And when there is time to think, then you think. Then you sit down and say, okay, let's think, what plane am I going to catch tomorrow?

What time do I have to go to the airport? What do I have to do now? Pick up the phone, make a phone call.

Fine. It's beautiful. You're not losing yourself in future.

It's practical matters. And once you've done the practical matters, you've thought about,

you've planned your next week, then you come back to the now. The inner transformation is not really about finding lots of answers to your questions, but finding a new relationship to thought, where not every thought seduces you anymore.

And if a beautiful girl runs past and you find yourself following her, you don't have to think, oh, I shouldn't be watching this girl because I'm spiritual now. No. If you can let go, just for a moment, not for the rest of your life, just for this moment, let go of the need to understand anything, so that you're truly present in this moment.

Just right now. Just what is. But don't forget yourself, because you are the consciousness behind it.

You are the space. You are the presence. So you've probably come here with lots of questions, but let's start off with me asking you just one question, and then you can ask yours.

[Speaker 6] (3:30:25 - 3:30:26)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (3:30:27 - 3:30:29)

May I ask how old you are?

[Speaker 6] (3:30:30 - 3:30:31)

Yes. I'm 24.

[Speaker 1] (3:30:32 - 3:30:43)

24. Not that it matters. So 24 means you've already had quite a few life experiences.

You've been to school. You've fallen in love.

[Speaker 6] (3:30:44 - 3:30:44)

I think so.

[Speaker 1] (3:30:45 - 3:30:46)

Fallen out of love.

[Speaker 6] (3:30:46 - 3:30:47)

I think so.

[Speaker 1] (3:30:47 - 3:32:36)

And have had all kinds of experiences, perhaps in different places, meeting different people, different circumstances. The body probably has been well most of the time, but you've also experienced maybe one or two illnesses. Now, is there in all those things that you have experienced so far, which is a continuously changing flux of things, is there any ingredient in there that was always the same, that didn't change?

I'd just like to ask you to see if you can find any ingredient in all the things that you have experienced so far that's always been the same. We could start perhaps by asking, could it be the things around you? Obviously not, because the things around you change continuously.

Could it be your thoughts? No, because the thoughts that go through your mind also change continuously. Could it be your feelings or your emotions?

No, as you know, they also change all the time. So what is it, if anything, that hasn't changed, that doesn't change? Is there one ingredient in all your experiences, good or bad, up or down, that's always been there?

[Speaker 6] (3:32:40 - 3:32:44)

Well, I think I've been in here, I've been inside.

[Speaker 1] (3:32:45 - 3:33:30)

Now, when you say, I, what does that mean? What is that I? Now, because we've already seen, it can't be your thoughts, because they change all the time.

Your feelings or emotions, they change all the time. Your sense experiences, things that you perceive around you, change all the time. So wherever we look, there's change.

So when you say, I, and point to the I as that which doesn't change, it cannot be what happens to you, it cannot be the thoughts that go through your mind, it cannot be the emotions, the feelings that you experience. So what is the nature of that I? What does that word mean or point to?

[Speaker 6] (3:33:32 - 3:33:39)

It's the listening, it's what hears, what's behind.

[Speaker 1] (3:33:41 - 3:45:31)

What's behind the thoughts, what's behind the sense perceptions, what's behind all the experiences and the feelings and so on. And so, the question that I'm asking does not really require an abstract answer, but I want you to actually feel or sense inside yourself that which doesn't change. No matter where you go, no matter what you do, or who you're with, or whether the body is well or unwell, when I ask, you said, it's I, and I've

asked, what's the nature of that I?

And now you may be stuck for words. But you said one word, and that was listening. Now, when you're truly listening, there is a certain alert spaciousness, because otherwise you're not truly listening.

And so if that had to be expressed through a gesture, it could be, you could raise a finger gently and say, listen. So I say to you, listen. And you listen, there's a moment of spacious awareness, and there's no thought in it.

So when you said listening, you were actually getting very close to the nature of who you truly are underneath all the circumstances of your life. And circumstances includes thoughts and emotions. If you don't find that, who or what you are underneath all the circumstances, no matter how many questions you ask and how many good answers you get, won't help you very much, and there will be no end to the questioning, because every answer generates further questions.

So we are talking about becoming familiar with a different state of consciousness. Not that that has never been there. It's always been there, because it's the I, but it's always been overlooked.

Because the circumstances, things that happen to you, and your thinking and your emotions, have such overwhelming pulling force that they always pull your attention in completely. And so attention is that which is there when you're truly listening. And in the moment of attention, there's no thinking, but there is an aware presence.

So the answer that you gave is absolutely right. Not everybody would have put it this way, but listening points to who you truly are underneath all the things that continuously change. Now I'd like you to, as we speak, this is not an intellectual discussion, because if this were intellectual, you should have gone to a professor of philosophy or some intellectual at a university.

I've been over there. And ultimately, you get many answers, but all those answers will always make you end up with more questions, because they don't get you to the core of who you are. So let's start off with that.

And what we are pointing to is a sense of I, of beingness, that is deeper than anything that happens in your life. It's always there, has always been there, right now. And that is closely related to the state of attentive listening, to get in touch with that, to sense it.

Underneath it all, there is a timeless presence. Even in 50 years' time, in 60 years' time, when this body is getting old, and this body, the cells, it won't be the same body. The cells of the body will have been renewed many times.

There won't be a single cell. Materially, there won't be a single thing that's left in 50

years, even though you may still be alive. There won't be a single thing that's left materially that's here now.

Every cell will have been renewed. And so the body will have grown older, and yet something timeless, deep within, will still be exactly the same as it is now, untouched by time. I.

I before it becomes this or that. Because the moment you say, I am American, I am this or that, I am a professional, or I am a jobless person, or I am a millionaire, or I am a homeless person, those all form identifications with changing circumstances. And so people look for something there to provide permanency in their lives.

They want to identify with something that they finally can say, there, that's it, I found it. What they really want to say is, I found myself, finally. So they look for themselves through external possessions, through acquired knowledge, through an accumulation of experiences, or sexual encounters.

Some people derive their sense of self from that. The more women you can conquer or seduce or have sex with, the more you feel, I'm getting somewhere. Of course, after a few years, you realize it's not getting you anywhere.

Nothing will get you anywhere, which means to yourself, if you're looking for yourself in any experience. And that's the fallacy of most people. They look for themselves in changing circumstances.

They look for themselves in their thought processes. They identify with their thoughts and opinions and their judgments and this and that, and it changes. Your opinions may change.

You may be a Democrat now in 50 years' time when you have become a solid citizen. You may become a Republican. You have a completely different set of opinions.

It's just a different set of opinions. And then you feel like the thoughts have changed, but the underlying I hasn't changed. So can you go through life being in touch with that, being in touch with that in the different situations, different circumstances, different places, so that you're not completely lost in the things.

I sometimes call it the thingness of life, one thing after another. There's nothing wrong with that. But if you haven't found yourself yet, you don't know what that I is, then you're looking for the I in things.

And things include your thinking, because every thought is also a formation. It has a certain form, a thought form. It comes and then it goes.

Every emotion, it comes. It's an energy field inside you. It comes, has a certain lifespan,

and then it subsides, and then another one comes.

That's all the thingness of life. It's forms that come and go all the time. The only thing that doesn't come and go is I, that which underlies all that.

And that's not an intellectual thing that I'm trying to convince you of, because that would not be helpful. The question is, at this moment, can I sense the presence that I am, that is prior to anything that happens to me, or has ever happened, or can ever happen? Can I sense that right now?

Yes, you can. Because if you couldn't, you wouldn't have said listening, because listening you already knew. It came from that deeper place of alert attention that in itself has no content.

The content comes when things happen. But in itself, the I that you are, one could describe it as space. It's not lifeless.

It's full of life. All of life comes out of that. But in itself, it is spacious.

Buddha called it emptiness. And it's completely misunderstood by people, because the university professors look at the word emptiness and then say the Buddhist teachings are life-denying. The total opposite is true, because Jesus called the same space the fullness of life.

Because at the same time, it is life in its fullness. To be able to sense that, at first it's very subtle in the background. But as you become familiar with that dimension, it's always there somewhere, no matter what you do, even when you meet a beautiful girl and you're talking to her.

From there, you can listen to yourself talking, and it's fine. You're not totally lost in your experiences. There's always a sense of aliveness and peace in the background.

And that influences how you live your life. That sense, the I, the timeless I, because on the surface you have the time-bound I that grows older. It's identified with thinking and emotions and things happen to it and so on.

But underneath it is the timeless I. Now, the word I is probably the most frequently used word in the language. Whenever you listen to people, they say, what's the word they use most frequently when you listen to a conversation?

Probably, you'll find it's the word I. Now, what they refer to is not the timeless, because they haven't found that. They refer to a superficial sense of I identification with things, with thinking, with emotions.

I am angry. I am American. I am this.

I am that. Identification with something. So that I is the greatest illusion, because there's no substance there, nothing permanent.

[Speaker 6] (3:45:32 - 3:45:35)

So if I'm not something, am I nothing?

[Speaker 1] (3:45:36 - 4:08:42)

Yes. I would pronounce that differently, though. I would say, you are no thing.

Now, there's a difference between no thing and nothing. Nothing is simply denial. But no thing means there is a presence there, but it has no form.

Nothing that you can grasp. It has no shape and no form and no name. The ancient Chinese call it the Tao, which cannot be named.

There's a beautiful, it's 3,000 years old Chinese book of wisdom, the Tao Te Ching. I recommend it to everybody. And the first line in it is, the Tao that can be named or spoken of is not the true Tao.

And so that there is the presence that you sense, a presence that has no form. In ancient language, Christian, Hebrew, there's the word spirit. But I don't use that word, because it's been used for hundreds of years and misunderstood.

So if I used spirit, people would immediately have some image of what it is, some form, or call it the Holy Spirit. And there's hundreds of years of misconceptions of what spirit is, so we forget about the word spirit. But in its original true meaning, that's what spirit points to.

The essence of who you are is formless. Now, we could use the word consciousness as the essence of who you are. And you can sense it, but you can never grasp it.

And you cannot really know it. You can only know something that is not you, an object, anything that becomes an object of consciousness. I look at this plant, and I know it by looking at it, and by having a name for it, I say I know this plant.

This plant is an object that arises in consciousness. And I look at you. I see a shape and a form, and obviously what I see, nobody knows whether what you see out there is actually there, because the image that you have in your mind of your surrounding environment, there's an optical, the eye, like a camera lens, they send a picture into the brain, the picture is translated into nerve impulses and chemicals that reach the brain, and the brain decodes what I see and then reassembles the picture.

And then suddenly I see you. Nobody knows what's actually out there. But let's just leave it.

Here we have, looking at you, this is an object that arises in consciousness, in the space that I am. Then I look away, and another object arises in the space that I am. Or I listen to something that arises in the space that I am.

Or a thought comes that arises in the space that I am, the presence that I am. But the presence itself, you can't know it in the way that you know a plant, or you know a person, or you know a sound, or you know a thought, because it would have to reflect back on itself. You cannot make it into an object.

So you cannot make yourself into an object of knowledge. You can only be that presence, but you can't know it because you would externalize it. And this is the mistake that humans have made over thousands of years.

They made themselves into an object. And they talk about me and my story. I'm sure you have one, the story of me.

And so when you make yourself into an object, you live with yourself. Some people love themselves one day, and they hate themselves the next day. And the following day, they're not quite sure.

And then you have feeling guilt. People have relationships with an image that they have in their mind of themselves, me. People talk to themselves in their mind.

Well, that wasn't very good. You didn't do a good thing. You shouldn't have done that.

Who is talking to whom? There's a voice in the head that talks to yourself. The mind has split itself in two and is talking to itself.

And out of that continuous talking comes the story of me and identification with that. And the questions that you are going to ask probably have a lot to do with the story of me, to find out more about it, about my life. Because, after all, that's what everybody is most interested in.

You are here because you are the main character in the story of yourself. And the main character in that story has quite a few things that he feels puzzled about and doesn't understand. And wants questions.

And the story, in some ways it's worked and in other ways it hasn't worked. And so the character in the story has come here and wants to know how to make the story work better. Isn't that so?

Yes. Now, whatever answers anybody can give you of how to make the story work better, there are things you can make the story work better. But all that doesn't really help unless you get to the bottom behind the story.

The I behind the story. Then, if you are in touch with that throughout your life, the story

will unfold with much greater ease. Because there is a deeper dimension that is there.

But if there is only the story, nothing will ever satisfy the main character in that story. You. If the main character in that story, you, has never known the deeper I.

The timeless presence that is the consciousness that you are. The attentive, spacious I. Can you feel that your body is alive?

Mm-hmm. Because when you feel the aliveness inside your body, I call it inner body, the usually hyperactive mind slows down. Now, the hyperactive mind is extremely repetitive.

You might have noticed that probably 99% of your thoughts, you've had them before, they're repetitive. So new thoughts are relatively rare when there's only the hyperactive mind. It's just the same old things going through your mind again and again.

The moment you feel the inner body, in order to be able to feel the aliveness here, some of your attention has to go from the head within, into the body. So you're removing some attention away from thinking. It doesn't necessarily mean that thinking stops totally, but it subsides, slows down.

There may even be little spaces in between one thought and the next thought. So thinking slows down because part of your attention is in the inner energy field, the aliveness that most people never feel because they're so absorbed in their thoughts, they don't even feel that they are alive anymore. So thinking subsides and there are even little spaces in between thoughts.

And then it's much more likely that thoughts that come then are new thoughts, sometimes they are insights, they are new ways of looking at things, sudden realizations. They can only come if you are able to calm the mind, but not as something that you feel, I need to calm my mind, but simply by diverting attention away from it, not by making some effort to calm your mind. All you do is you take attention away from it, and so then there is more spaciousness, not just one thought after another, and then your thinking actually improves, which means it's more alive, more original, it's more powerful, you have better ideas, and the way in which you interact with people is more real, because the real comes not from the accumulated stuff in your mind, that's all the roles that you play, not just you, everybody. Everybody plays their roles, they've been conditioned to play certain roles.

You have an image of who you are when you meet a beautiful woman, you play a certain role. You want to present the best possible image, and she does the same. You can observe it when two young people are attracted to each other, they meet the first few days and weeks, they look different from the way they usually look, because they present an image that wants to attract the other, and it's unconscious, it's a role that they play.

It's only after the honeymoon, when everyday life begins, that gradually the image, and you believe that that image that you see in her is who she is, and she believes that you don't know that you're both playing roles, but you cannot keep up the roles indefinitely, so after the honeymoon, gradually, they wear down the roles, and then some discontent arises, and suddenly the mask slips. You can't play a role continuously, the role of me, the attractive one. So that's to get out of the role playing that otherwise you're stuck with for the rest of your life.

You have a certain role for your partner for a while, you have another role for your work situation, you have another role for wherever you go, you slip into subtle differences in the way in which you behave. When you talk to the chairman of the board or the Dalai Lama, you will behave in a certain way, and then you might notice when you talk to the plumber, there will be subtle differences in the way in which you talk. You play a different role.

You think, oh, this is not appropriate here. It's only when you stop playing roles, when you observe the Dalai Lama, how he behaves. Now, you might have thought, well, the Dalai Lama probably plays the role of the Dalai Lama, but he doesn't.

There's such simplicity, openness, and genuineness in him. He talks the same way to everybody. Whether he meets the plumber or the pope makes no difference because he doesn't play conditioned roles anymore.

And that is only possible when you access a dimension within yourself that is deeper than the mind. And we just did it, or we are still doing it, simply by taking attention away from thought and direct it into the aliveness of the body. That means suddenly there's some space between thoughts.

And then you can relate to other human beings more genuinely. And you don't need to prepare things that you're going to say next. You don't say things in order to manipulate that person.

You don't say things in order to create an effect. They simply, spontaneity comes out of that place. The spontaneity doesn't come out of the accumulated stuff in your mind.

The spontaneity comes only to the extent that you can access the dimension that is deeper than mind, which we may call the deeper eye, which we may call alert stillness. That is always there. Alert spaciousness.

Access that so mind subsides. Then you live differently. The more you access now at the moment, these are only glimpses for you, but that's good enough.

A glimpse later becomes a wider space of that. So that is something to remember, not as a memory, but to remember to do in your daily life as much as possible. Wherever you are, whatever you're doing, whoever you are talking to, or even when you're alone, go

within sometimes and feel that the body is alive.

There's life in my hands. You're not imagining anything. You actually feel that there is an aliveness here.

And then once you can feel the hands, you can feel the arms, the feet, the legs. You are inhabiting the body. And the body loves that.

It loves your attention. Most people don't give their body attention. Even if they look after the body extremely, like you go to a gym every day, or you use all kinds of stuff to put on your body, you might think that these people are looking after their body.

But all they're looking after is the external of the body. They are not necessarily present within. They cannot feel the aliveness.

Some maybe they can, but most not. They're only concerned with the external body. Here we are concerned with the inner, and it doesn't matter.

The inner body has nothing to do with what the external body looks like, whether you're 80 years old or 20 years old, whether you have a young body or an old body. The sensation of the inner body is always the same. It's alive.

And the body loves your attention. It's a bit like when you don't give enough attention to a child, after a while the child cries because it wants to attract your attention. The baby does it.

And then finally you give, because attention is energy. It's enormous energy. Now, most attention is consciousness.

Most attention for most people is continuously absorbed by thinking. You can see it when you talk to them. They're not there, really.

They're thinking. They're looking at you, but they're thinking about the next thought they're going to ask. As you sit there, maybe you're thinking about, okay, what's my next question?

And that's normal. It's not a personal fault of yours. It's normal to lose yourself.

And when you lose, that means you're not really present when you're thinking about the next thing. So that's normal. You don't have to beat yourself up for that.

It's normal. But there is another way to live, and that's the way to be present, to give attention not just to your thoughts, to give attention to your body. If you don't give enough attention to a child, of course a child can also become addicted to attention, but that's a different matter.

There needs to be a balance. But a child does need attention. It's vital.

Not an excessive amount, but enough, because attention is energy. And the body loves it as much as a child. It wants to be noticed.

It wants your attention. And if it doesn't, it cries. It might become ill.

That's the crying of the body. You're neglecting it. You're not inhabiting it.

You're inhabiting the uppermost loft in your house. You're in a big house, and you live always under the roof. You never go downstairs.

There are lots of floors. You have no idea what's going on there. So that's a vital thing, and it is a way of also accessing the space within.

That is the eye that has no form. That is the consciousness. That is also intelligence.

We think of intelligence as the mind's ability to accumulate knowledge and to solve problems. That's probably what we consider to be intelligence, but that's an extremely narrow view of what intelligence is. What people can measure in IQ tests is an extremely narrow view of intelligence.

I cannot solve the simplest of IQ tests. So I've never done a total test, but I'm sure my IQ would be extremely low because that is not how this mind works. Solving little puzzles, I've never been able to do that.

But intelligence is a much vaster thing than the ability to accumulate information and then regurgitate it or analyze it or cut it into smaller and smaller pieces, what they do at universities, research projects. The pieces are getting smaller and smaller and smaller. The Ph.D. subjects are getting more and more specialized because so many people are working on things and then you have to put your tiny piece there. Okay, I take this piece and write my Ph.D. about that. You can cut that up a hundred times. And then once you've written your Ph.D., somebody else comes and takes a tiny piece out of that and says, Oh, I can cut this up even further. And that's considered intelligence. But true intelligence resides in that dimension of alert stillness. If you have access to that, that's where the original intelligence resides.

So anybody who is creative, and there are not that many human beings in this world who are truly creative, anybody who is creative has some access, perhaps only in the little area of their field of expertise where they have some access to that dimension, the stillness. Einstein had it. He was very slow.

He was not considered intelligent at school because he was too slow. They said not suitable for mathematics, they said, and physics because his thinking was very slow. Now what does it mean?

It means there were lots of spaces in between the thoughts. He wasn't at school like one of the so-called intelligent children who always, when the teacher asks a question, the hand goes up immediately. I know, I know.

That's very superficial. Occasionally that may be okay. But there are some children, and that is not recognized by our society, who are very deeply intelligent but not in the way that we consider, what we consider intelligence, and they tend to be slower.

They don't immediately have an answer because they know it's superficial to have a true answer. You have to go deeper within. But if you allowed those children to go deeper, then you would see how original their thinking actually is.

So when we just went into the, you went into the body, already you noticed some new thoughts came, not the old thoughts. It only requires a tiny space for something new to arise. Not that you're doing it in order to have new thoughts.

You're doing it because it feels good to feel the aliveness within you. And the more familiar you become with that, with inhabiting your body, the more strongly you can feel that aliveness. It's almost as if you could feel every cell of the body vibrating slightly.

And it's a beautiful feeling, just an aliveness there. And that is an enormously healing thing to do for the body.

[Speaker 6] (4:08:44 - 4:09:18)

I really want to know about guilt. I feel guilty all the time for little things I'm doing or that I'm not doing. And there are things that I know I did that were mistakes to other people.

So I know that you're supposed to be free and liberated in the now, but shouldn't I feel bad about this stuff? I mean, and what's going to keep me, if I'm free and liberated in the now, from like doing bad things to people?

[Speaker 1] (4:09:20 - 4:22:27)

Human beings act out of their conditioning. So every human being is conditioned by their upbringing, by the surrounding culture, by many factors, conditioned to think and feel and behave in certain ways. And so people do all kinds of things to other people and even to themselves without knowing what they are doing.

They're simply acting out the conditioning of their mind. And Jesus knew that because he said on the cross, Forgive them for they know not what they do. So humans create an enormous amount of suffering for themselves and others, but they don't know that this is what they are doing.

People act out of conditioning. So when you suddenly see that something that you did in the past created suffering for yourself or others or both, when you see that, the seeing of

it does not come out of the conditioning of your mind. When you become aware of certain behavior or thought patterns in you, the awareness, the presence, the deeper presence that you are has come in.

And from there you can see what you did was very limited. It created suffering for yourself or somebody else or other people, and you didn't even know it. So what was acting at that time?

If you say that was me and therefore I must be bad, you are equating the conditioned mind, your conditioned mind, the conditioning of your mind with who you are. If you say, I did that, therefore I am bad, and continuously think about it, you are equating who you are with what we could call unconsciousness. Unconsciousness means to be totally identified with the conditioning of the mind.

So you just have to act it out. Now there are still millions of humans on the planet who live in that way because the dimension of awareness hasn't arisen yet. So they never know what they are doing.

They continue to inflict suffering on themselves and others, to act unconsciously, but they don't know that this is what they are doing. They cannot do otherwise. So the moment you realize this is what I did, who you are is the awareness that sees that.

Who you are is not what you did. What you did was the conditioning of your mind playing itself out. So you become, you trap yourself in an illusory identity if you feel that I did that.

No, who is speaking, who is I? Are you the conditioned patterns of your mind or are you the awareness that sees, that's the spaciousness within the deeper eye, that sees what the mind is doing, it sees what the mind created in the past, it even sees what the mind is creating at this very moment. If you are aware of the things, the thoughts that go through your head, how you speak to another human being, you may be acting out a role and suddenly there's an awareness that you know that you are acting out a role.

And then comes the possibility of, instead of being the role, being the awareness and then act in a truly genuine way with enhanced intelligence. So the unconscious action was unintelligent action because it was action created by the conditioning of your mind which has nothing to do with who you are. So there's a tendency for the mind to personalize the conditioning and say, I did that.

And that creates guilt and that keeps you trapped in a very narrow sense of self because you have equated who you consider to be yourself with conditioned patterns that you acted out at the time. It wasn't you, it was unconscious, human unconsciousness, no more. And now you see it, so you see it and at this moment you would not act in this way because the awareness is there.

Maybe the awareness will stay and this will never happen again. It is also possible that the awareness becomes obscured again and the same behavior pattern happens again and you don't know it except afterwards when the awareness comes again, oh, I did it again. And this can happen quite frequently.

So it's important, it's good to be aware afterwards if you do not misuse the mind, don't allow the mind to misuse the awareness and make some identity, manufacture some identity out of that for yourself and say that was me, it wasn't me. That's the main thing. Who are you?

You are the awareness. Anything else is forms that arise, thought forms, emotional forms, behavior patterns. So your destiny and your purpose in life is to increasingly be the awareness rather than the conditioned pattern.

But as long as the conditioned pattern is there, it's there. It's good if the moment of transformation comes if the awareness is there while the pattern plays itself out. That's the beginning of the end of the conditioned pattern.

So if it's a certain kind of behavior, perhaps with women, you do essentially the same kind of thing and it happens again and again and the awareness comes afterwards and one day the awareness comes in the middle of doing it. In the middle of it, you see what you're doing. There's a seeing of it.

And that's the beginning of the end of the pattern. Then it may, just one or two more times, the pattern may come up in a weaker form and it will then collapse. So in other words, you are making what was unconscious, conscious.

And that changes it. So you do not have to manipulate yourself and try to engineer inner change. I have to make myself into a better person.

That doesn't usually work. That just creates conflict because you have one image of yourself as the good person that you want to be or that you would like to think of yourself as that or you'd like others to think of you as a good person and then you have unconscious behavior patterns that completely contradict that image of a good person. And then for the rest of your life you live in that conflict.

The good person can talk to the bad one in your head. It's just two thought patterns. So that doesn't work.

What works is to be the awareness, to see it, to be awake enough, alert enough, and that when the present moment comes in, to see are you present in this moment to what happens in this moment, not only externally but internally also. And are you allowing it? Don't reject anything.

If you feel a thought comes in, an emotion comes in, and maybe it's not a good thought.

Maybe your mind says, after the thought has come in, your mind says, oh, that wasn't a good thought, I shouldn't have thought that. But they are both just thoughts.

The so-called bad thought was just a thought and the next thought that said that wasn't a good thought was just another thought. Now, it's possible that the bad thought made you do something bad. That's possible.

But the good thought cannot prevent that. The only thing that can prevent that is to be conscious so that the thought does not control you, the conditioned mind doesn't control you. Be there as the witness to your thoughts.

Just don't reject anything. So don't go wrong there. I know you're concerned about your mind and certain thoughts that go through your mind.

And you would rather be a good person and have good thoughts all the time, but it's not happening. And I can assure you it's not happening to anybody. Somebody is just having good thoughts because the human mind is the human mind.

It has polarities of good and bad and high and low. So don't try to bring about on that level the perfect me. It doesn't exist.

Allow yourself the imperfections. Allow the thoughts to be there. They come.

If you fight them, you make them stronger. People who have the worst problems with thoughts are people who are spiritual, so to speak. They see themselves or are seen by others as spiritual.

They have to live the role, for example, the vicar, the priest. They have to live the role of a spiritual person and they cannot admit to themselves that they have bad thoughts. So they suppress and they may have bad emotions, anger, resentment.

And they say, No, I'm not having bad emotions. I'm a good Christian. They can't even admit to themselves and that makes it even worse.

And then suddenly very bad behavior comes out of them and they don't know where it came from. So all you have to, with thoughts, all you need to be concerned about is to be the awareness. Allow the thoughts.

Then they actually have less power over you because you are not, don't look for yourself in any thought that comes into your head. It's not who you are. They're just thoughts.

It's not who you are. If you have bad thoughts for two hours, it doesn't make you into a bad person. It just means that so-called bad thoughts are going through your head.

And then you watch it. And as you allow them, there is a deeper space, the eye. From there you watch.

Thoughts are like clouds passing. You don't have to follow every thought and then thoughts can become very tedious. You can have one repetitive thought pattern going on in your mind for hours or even days.

You don't have to follow every thought when you're aware. You watch the thought. There it comes.

What are you going to do to this obnoxious person? I'm going to kill this obnoxious person. Comes the thought.

And then the thought drifts out and the awareness remains. And then it's lost power already. It's nothing.

So you find a spacious relationship with your thoughts. You are nothing that arises in that beautiful space of who you are, the consciousness that you are, which is spacious intelligence. None of that is who you are.

They are forms. They come and go. So thought is not a problem.

Be there as the witness to what goes on inside you. Then change happens by itself. The mind will always have good and bad, up and down.

It has polarities. But that's not who you are and you don't have to act on it. Increasingly you act from the state of aware presence.

Action can come from the limited mind and it's not usually skillful action. Or action can arise out of the state of aware presence. So that's the end of guilt.

[Speaker 6] (4:22:30 - 4:22:42)

What's the test? I mean, how do you know that this is out of the awareness after the fact? If you could go back and look at your actions and go, yeah, that was out of awareness.

No, but that wasn't. How would you know?

[Speaker 1] (4:22:42 - 4:25:52)

Well, you know, awareness doesn't create suffering for yourself or others when it comes out of awareness. So you know when you look at action, it has a totally different quality to it. It's not self-serving.

The action did not happen because you needed something from that person. Awareness is not needy. When action arises out of awareness, you do not need to use the other human being for some purpose, ulterior motive.

But when you act out of the conditioned mind, the egoic mind, you're always trying to,

you're not only trying to use the present moment because you're hoping to get to some better moment. You make the present moment into a means to an end. You also make other human beings into a means to an end because you want something through them.

So that's where you want to be with this beautiful woman because you want to be seen with her or you want to conquer her and so enhance your self-image. Or you want sexual pleasure from her. But you want something.

If you're acting out of awareness, the acting is not under the law of wanting. It's not that you want anything. And that's also where loving action can only arise out of that because love does not want anything.

True love does not want anything. So that's where it's totally selfless action. And when you look back on it, you can see very clearly whether there was self in the action.

You wanted something for yourself to enhance yourself or whether that was truly action totally free of self. And that's the most effective and the most powerful action is when the self, the image of me, the thought structure of me goes out of the action and action arises that is totally selfless. That action doesn't create problems.

The Buddhist monk said when he was asked, what's the meaning of Zen Buddhism? What's the meaning of Zen? And the monk said, oh, that's easy.

No self, no problem. That's it. So you begin to live and act without a mentally constructed self.

You live from the aware presence. But for a while, the two are there. And the awareness often comes in after something has happened that was unconscious and you see it.

Don't beat yourself up. It's only the human condition. But whenever you see unconsciousness has just happened or happened the other day and now you see it or you see it in the middle of it, it's good to see it.

The more you see it, the more awake you become. Don't personalize it. It's nothing.

It's not who you are. That's the main thing.

[Speaker 6] (4:25:54 - 4:26:03)

So can the now make me rich, powerful, free, happy, smarter, more loving, more loved?

[Speaker 1] (4:26:05 - 4:37:52)

Yes, all of those things. Rich? Yes.

Let's start with rich and then we'll look at the next one. Can the now make me rich? Yes.

Now what does it mean to be rich? Rich means it's not what people think it is. It's not to have lots of possessions.

That may be one aspect of being rich. But rich means to be in touch with the fullness of life. And the only place where you can find the fullness of life, the intense aliveness that you sense when you are present to now is here.

When you are open to the present moment, what comes in is a gratitude for what is, no matter what it's, a little plant, the air you're breathing, the light that's coming through the window, the sound of a bird, whatever it is, there's a goodness to it. And even if it looks bad, even if it's a dead animal or a dead human, when you are totally aligned with the present moment, there's a peace that comes into your perceptions. And with that peace comes a gratitude that is very deep.

And so you're experiencing really life for the first time when you become present. And so to be in a state of gratitude for what is, is really what being wealthy means. The present moment is always enough.

And so the definition of wealthy really is to be, to have enough, to feel already the fullness of life, an expression that Jesus used. He said, I want you to have the fullness of life. And people didn't quite understand what he meant.

Was Jesus talking about shopping malls, that you have 100, 500 shops in one huge shopping mall and you have thousands of things to choose from? Was he predicting the arrival of shopping malls? Is that the fullness of life?

You can walk around and have lots of money and credit cards and you can buy anything you like. Now, there are people who can do that. They are not happy.

So he's not talking about many, many things when he talks about the fullness of life. He's talking about the one thing. It's to feel the intensity of being alive.

And you can only feel that intensity of aliveness when you're in the present moment with your attention. One way of being in the present moment, as you know, is to feel the inner aliveness of the body, to feel the aliveness that is in every cell of the body. It's alive.

And the more you go there, the stronger that feeling becomes. And once you are connected with that, you feel that the world around you is intensely alive too. It was alive before, but you didn't see it because there was too much thought stuff going through your mind continuously.

The world became dead because everything was immediately labeled mentally. That's a tree. That's a dog.

The moment you label it, you don't look anymore. It's not alive anymore. Everything gets deadened through mental abstraction when you go around the voice in your head immediately calling things, calling things names, giving things names.

So when you become more present, there's this alert attention with which you meet your surroundings. Once you know the fullness of life that is already here now, and then gratitude arises for what is, no matter what it is, then living in this way, eventually that fullness that in essence is an inner realization rather than outer, that's the foundation for wealth, is to feel the fullness of life within. And then if you live in that way, in connectedness with that, eventually the fullness of life will also manifest for you externally in various ways.

Meaningful activity is a form of wealth. To know that what you're doing is helping other human beings brings an external fullness also into your life, which is a form of wealth. And wealth may also come in the form of things coming to you, more conventional things, home or car or whatever it may be.

Those things also come much more easily when basically you already feel the fullness even long before it comes externally. So basically you feel already wealthy when you live fully in the present moment, you never feel really poor. I perhaps spent 10 years of my life at least living what people would say below the poverty line, and I never felt poor, I always felt rich, although for a long time I had nothing, no external possessions.

But it was so fulfilling to live every moment fully present to the moment, that I felt wealthy, abundant. And much, much later did actually external abundance come into my life to some extent. And that didn't make me feel better, I feel just when now I have a car, during those years I used a bicycle mostly, or the bus, and I don't feel better now because I have a nice car, I feel exactly the same, but it's nice to have a nice comfortable car, with air conditioning in the summer, but the fullness hasn't changed, it hasn't done anything to change that.

So already the foundation is to be fully alive in the present moment, and then it is much more likely that external wealth will also come to you as an outer manifestation of an inner reality. If you feel wealthy already, but if you feel poor, and feel that you really need to make money now, even if you achieve it, you'll be unhappy with your wealth, because it comes out of the unhappiness. So there are many people who are creating wealth these days, they build up a big business or an enterprise, but it comes out of a deep dissatisfaction with what is, it comes out of an enormous neediness to show to the world that you are somebody, or to prove to yourself or the world how good you are, and that is not conducive to true happiness.

There are many wealthy people who are unhappy in their wealth, and they are not really wealthy, and they are basically still deprived, they are deprived of the fullness of life, and they have perhaps five or ten houses in different places, cars, yacht, and yet they

are deprived of the fullness, and so they need more and more, and it doesn't help. So here we have living in the present moment, brings you into the fullness of life now, and then eventually it will also manifest in different ways externally for you. Power was the other thing, will it bring me power?

Yes, but not power to the ego, it will make your life more empowered, that what you do, much greater power flows into what you do, because what you are doing, the action that you are performing, whatever it is, in the present moment, the only place where you can do anything, the action that you are performing in the present moment is not a means to an end. For most people, they are active, but they are active because they want to get there, to that point in the future, they want the end result, their eyes are on the end result. So they may be busy building up a business, because they want to become wealthy, but they reduce the quality and aliveness of the present moment, because they are reducing the present moment to a means to an end.

They give it inferior status. In their minds, the future is more important, because that is where they are going to be wealthy. But then the pattern remains inside them, and even when they have the money, they still have the same basic psychological pattern, which means they need the next moment, and always they reduce the present moment to a means to an end.

So the action is not of high quality, it does not contribute to happiness, they don't make themselves happy, and they don't make others happy with what they do. So that's not truly empowered, and it is low quality action. High quality action comes when you don't reduce the present moment to a means to an end.

That's truly empowered action. Only when you no longer reduce this moment to a means to an end can you give your full attention to whatever it is that you are doing now. Some great artists do it, sportsmen do it.

When they perform, they are truly present. It's not a means to an end. They're totally in the now.

And so high quality action comes out of that, and this is empowered action. So living in the now brings power into your life, true power, not the pseudo power of the ego. And then whatever comes out of it, out of that action, will be good in one way or another.

It will not be, one could say, I call it, it's not karmic action, which means karmic action, it's an Eastern term, karma. Karmic action creates more unhappiness. It comes out of unhappiness and creates more unhappiness for yourself and others.

But out of presence, alignment with now, comes non-karmic action. It does not create more suffering on the planet. Because so many people are very, very active, but a lot of that activity ultimately creates more suffering on the planet.

So that's the power. What's the next thing that the now will bring you? What was the question?

[Speaker 6] (4:37:53 - 4:38:25)

I want to do what you're talking about. I want to feel good. I want to feel at peace.

But I guess I have a worry about, well, will I really be doing something good for the world? I mean, there's like people starving. There's all this sadness and all this pain.

And it's hard to believe that just me feeling peaceful is going to help that.

[Speaker 1] (4:38:26 - 4:52:30)

The only place where you can be free of the conditioning of your mind, because freedom is not an external thing, it's an internal thing, you can be in prison and you can be free. People have written to me from prison and they've read *The Power of Now*, and they said they now feel free. What does that mean?

True freedom is freedom from your mind, from the conditioned, all the conditioned thoughts and emotions that otherwise control you. Freedom is the freedom to step back from the conditioning into the deeper I, the awareness that you are. It's freedom from thought, ultimately, so that not every thought controls you.

So it's the freedom from conditioning. And basically it's the freedom from the past. So you're no longer determined, your behavior and your thinking is no longer determined by your past.

It's also freedom from future, because most people have a desperate need for the next moment. I call it psychological future. They need the fulfillment that they think the future will bring them.

It won't. So this is something for you to be aware of, because I know that pattern also still operates in you, believing that something in the future will bring you greater fulfillment than you have now. But it won't.

If you don't have it now, you won't have it then. You have to access *The Power of Now* regardless of your external circumstances. You can have that now.

You can't wait for the future, because once you're in the waiting mode, you'll always be waiting for the next moment. Even when you become a famous actor, it won't feel quite right. Maybe you're already famous, I don't know.

But it won't feel quite right, and there will be many things. When you're very famous, I've met one or two famous actors, and they come to this teaching. Why do they come?

Don't they have everything? No, they've realized they don't have what really matters. And suddenly they discover the spiritual dimension, because they've achieved everything else on the worldly dimension.

So go deeply into the present moment. Become deeply aligned and at one with the only thing there ever is in your life, the present moment. And that is where true power resides, and that is the only place where you can be truly free.

What's the next thing that you want? Happiness. Can happiness come in the future?

When I achieve this or that, then I'll be happy when I make it. But every situation that you go into will have a downside. If you're expecting circumstances to make you happy, they can do that for a while, and then you find, oh, it's not quite what I expected, and there's always another side to it.

And very often the very thing that makes you happy, if you have an external thing that makes you happy, that very thing will also make you unhappy. An example, a woman comes into your life who makes you happy. One, two, three years later, the same woman makes you unhappy.

It's the same thing. Or a job, a great job is offered to you, and it creates so much stress that you make yourself ill. It makes you happy first, and it makes you unhappy.

You become famous, and then you see the downside of fame. You can't go out in the street alone anymore. There's a riot the moment people see you.

You're a prisoner of your house. You can't go out without two or three bodyguards. Is that freedom?

And you thought you would be free when you become famous. I've met one or two famous people who, they can't go out alone. It's too dangerous, and people stop them all the time, and they gather around them.

They have to stay inside. Everything has to be organized. They have to jump in the car with tinted windows and bodyguards.

Is that freedom? Are they happy because of their fame? No, they have experienced the downside of fame.

It doesn't mean that you should not pursue goals. There's nothing wrong with being famous, but don't expect it to make you happy. The true happiness has to be found, it comes from being aligned with life internally.

And where is that? Now, here. A complete openness and yes to the present moment that takes you deep into the present moment.

That is, true happiness comes out of that. And then you can go on and do things and see if you can become famous. Why not?

Experience that. Experience as much as you can without hoping that some experience, or when you've accumulated enough experiences, you'll finally feel fulfilled and fully yourself. That won't happen.

There's no end to accumulating experiences and achieving this or that. You cannot find yourself there. You can only find yourself in the present moment.

For everything else, you need time to achieve success in your career, to learn to play the piano, to learn a foreign language. Even if you want to meet a woman, it takes time. You have to walk somewhere where the beautiful women hang out.

It takes time. Everything takes time. And so the mind thinks, OK, finding myself who I truly am will also take time.

It thinks, when I've added enough to who I think I am, maybe recognition from other people, fame, possessions, put all these things in the back, my back, and when I have enough things accumulated, then I will be full. And that moment will come at some point in the future. It doesn't.

Because the back, no matter how much you put in, it'll never feel full, besides from the fact that often things fall out of the back. You put something in here, and then something else falls out. You suddenly get wealth, and then you're unhappy in your marriage.

Or you're happy in your marriage, and suddenly the job doesn't work anymore. There's nothing... Stability isn't to be found in the external world.

It's in constant flux. This universe is not stable. People have this absurd illusion that they're living in a stable universe and that they can achieve some kind of stability in their lives.

They are shocked when suddenly big disasters happen, and you realize how unstable, really, everything is. So if you look... And that doesn't mean it's to be rejected.

Play in the world and enjoy the play. Play as much as you can. But don't expect anything out there to truly make you happy or fulfill you.

Happiness is to be found directly within yourself. It comes from being connected with who you are. This brings us back to where we started.

To be in touch, to feel the deeper I. And there's enormous joy in simply feeling the beingness that you are. To feel the I am that is deeper than this or that.

I am. The very life that you are, to feel that. To feel alive.

Out of that comes true happiness. And then you can play around in the world and you acquire things, and then you lose things, and you acquire some more, and then you lose some more, and in the end you lose everything. That's what everybody does.

You lose the body. In the end, its form dissolves sooner or later. But it's finding something that is deeper than any form inside yourself.

That's true happiness. Love also comes... True love comes only out of the true I.

True love cannot come out of the pseudo I that says I, the actor, I, the good looking actor, I, the famous actor, I, the American, I, the poor one or I, the wealthy one, or I, who is good with women. True love doesn't come out of that I. That's a pseudo I.

That's what most people refer to when they use that word that's so common, I. But the true love comes out when you're connected with the deeper I the I that has no form, the one thing that never leaves you, the one ingredient that's always there no matter where you are, what you do, what you experience, that never changes, the I, the consciousness that you are. When you live in connectedness with that, aligned with that, that's where true love comes.

Because when you meet another human being you can sense in them also there's the depths of the same I that is your identity. You recognize yourself in the other and the other as yourself. And you feel a deep connectedness much deeper than anything that you can say or think with the other human being.

And that's true love. True love is to feel that you're ultimately not separate. You're one.

That can only come out of the spaciousness that is part of the now. The now is space. What happens in the now is form.

Don't confuse the two. The reason why people think there are many, many moments in every day, in your lifetime, in every hour, because what happens changes continuously. The forms around you change continuously.

The thoughts that go through your head change. The emotions that you feel change. The people around you change.

So people think every time it's a new moment, this moment and another moment and another moment. If you look more deeply, you see it's not another moment. It's always now.

But the form that appears in the now changes continuously. But it's always now. And ultimately, now is who you are.

The space of now is the space of I. And then things happen in it and they change continuously. So there are two ways of saying, when they ask you, what is it that never

changes?

What is it that's always there in your life, no matter where you go and what you do? You can say, it's always I. The deepest I, not the superficial I that changes.

The thoughts, the emotions, who you are in the world. But the deeper I, that's always the same. And so another way of looking at it is to say, it's always now.

The now never changes. And then you find the miraculous thing, they're actually one. The space of now and who you are in the depths of your being is consciousness itself, before it becomes something.

The very foundation out of which all life comes. You could say God. God dwells in the depths of your being, not as some entity, but as the formless one life itself.

That is the deepest meaning of what now is. And that's why the now can never leave you. So I am the now, in essence.

I am not what happens. I am the space in which everything happens. That's your true identity.

And when you live one with that, knowing that, your life will be fruitful and a great and wonderful adventure. When you don't know who you are, then no matter what you do, what you achieve, where you go, who you meet, it won't satisfy you. That's how simple it is.

[Speaker 5] (4:52:52 - 4:53:26)

It has arrived. It has arrived. We talked about it off the top, right?

Are you one of those people who worries about everything? What happened yesterday? What's happening tomorrow?

And your mind just keeps going and going and going and going. And there's always somebody in your life that says, you've got to live in the moment. You've got to live in the moment.

If you worry so much about yesterday and today, you're missing the now. Well, chances are, your friend who told you that read our next guest's book, because he can help teach you to live in the moment. Millions of people have read his work.

Oprah loves him. Spiritual writer, teacher Eckhart Tolle will be right here. Here's his bio.

[Speaker 1] (4:53:39 - 4:53:44)

Who you are and stillness are one and the same.

[Speaker 5] (4:53:45 - 4:54:48)

Now, if you're into this guy, you consider Eckhart Tolle one of the world's most influential spiritual leaders. People say he's a master of inner calm and peace. Was he born that way?

Is he some kind of a Buddha? Well, no. Here's how it happened.

Eckhart was born in Germany, spent his teenage years in Spain, then headed to Britain for university and grad work. Now, up until that time, Eckhart said he was depressed, he was anxious, he was often suicidal. But at the tender age of 29, his life suddenly changed.

He says he woke up one day feeling an overwhelming sense of joy and peace. And it took him years to figure out what had happened. It took him even longer to teach others how to get to the same place.

So, in a nutshell, here's what Eckhart says. You are not your mind. In fact, he says your mind is your worst enemy, that it overtakes the real you and creates thoughts that make you miserable.

So, if you want to achieve peace, well, then you've got to disassociate yourself from your mind. Eckhart's key? Live in the present.

Because according to him, dwelling in the past only leads to guilt and regret. Thinking about the future brings anxiety and worry.

[Speaker 1] (4:54:48 - 4:54:49)

You may have noticed that already.

[Speaker 5] (4:54:51 - 4:55:49)

And it's all summed up in Eckhart's enormously successful book called *The Power of Now*. He wrote it in Vancouver, where he currently resides. That thing came out over ten years ago and sold more than five million copies.

Yeah, you know, thanks in large part to this person. She's also a big fan of Eckhart's follow-up book, *A New Earth*. It was one of her book club picks.

This is the most exciting thing I've ever done. And last year, she made it the basis for ten weeks of seminars with Eckhart on Oprah.com. Thank you.

Everybody, say hello to Eckhart Tolle. Great to see you, man. Okay.

You know, when you first published that book, *Paranay*, with a small independent publisher, 3,000 copies, I can imagine you would have no idea that this was going to

happen to you.

[Speaker 1] (4:55:50 - 4:56:46)

No, I thought the book would only appeal to people who were already deeply into spirituality or had been meditating for many years. And after about three or four months after it got published, I realized that many people were phoning and writing in to tell me they had bought more than one copy for friends or relatives. And then I began to realize that it was a kind of snowball effect.

And it would be growing and growing. That was a surprise. Another surprise was that for quite a few people, that was the first spiritual book they had ever read.

And it made sense to them. And so I hadn't realized the degree of readiness in people for this message. And that was the surprise.

And then more surprises came later. The book became what one reviewer called an underground bestseller for a while.

[Speaker 5] (4:56:46 - 4:56:50)

Usually in music, underground means people like it, but no one buys it.

[Speaker 1] (4:56:50 - 4:57:44)

Well, here underground means people buy it, but there's no publicity, there's no advertising, nothing on television about it. And so word of mouth. So it grew for about a year and a half.

It grew through word of mouth. Gradually it got to some cities. There was a time at that time I would take a few copies of the book to little spiritual bookstores in Vancouver every couple of weeks.

And then they would phone me again and say, We need another five copies. I would carry five copies. You did it yourself.

Yes. That was enormously satisfying to have this personal contact with the book. And at that time also there were not that many readers.

People could phone in and say, Oh, I'd like to meet you. And I said, Okay, what time do you want to meet? And then as it grew, after a while I couldn't do that anymore.

Rule number one, man, if someone wants to meet you on Facebook, don't.

[Speaker 5] (4:57:46 - 4:57:52)

That's the trick. Do you have horror stories? Horror stories.

Where you met somebody and you went, Oh, I've got to get out of here.

[Speaker 1] (4:57:54 - 4:58:23)

No, nothing that comes to mind. But the book does seem to, not only The Power of Now, also the later book, A New Earth, for some reason it does seem to upset some people. I remember my office getting, they told me, they don't show it to me, but they told me they got the old one package and somebody had shredded the entire New Earth book and sent the shredded version back to my office.

So something must have triggered something in here.

[Speaker 5] (4:58:26 - 4:58:35)

If you go back a few decades, you're 29 years old, a fateful night, is that what started this whole thing?

[Speaker 1] (4:58:35 - 5:01:08)

Yes, a night when I'd had many unhappy nights, but that night I was just so deeply depressed again and I'd spent the previous weeks in anxiety. What happened, a thought came into my head which said, I can't live with myself any longer. And at that moment a separation happened between myself and that thought and I looked at the thought and said, I can't live with myself, what does that mean?

There must be two of me, there's an I and there must be some unhappy self that I cannot live with. And through that, although I only understood the full implications years later, a separation happened between the unhappy self, which I later realized is a mental construct consisting of repetitive unhappy thoughts about me and my life, an unhappy story. I was continuously retelling myself the unhappy story of me and I was so identified with the unhappy story of me that there was no gap between that and me and that was the self that I couldn't live with.

And when I realized that there is a self I can't live with, something separated and I became the consciousness behind the unhappy self. And I could see that the whole structure of the unhappy self was a kind of fiction, a narrative that I kept repeating in my mind. So the separation happened and I realized that in essence I'm not my story, whether happy or unhappy, I'm the consciousness behind the story.

The consciousness or the space, whatever you want to call it, there's not really a name for it. And I suddenly realized myself as that and with that I was in a state of peace. From then onwards I never again identified with this unhappy mental construct, the me with its story.

And that's what I call now the shift in consciousness that happened, or you could also

call it an awakening. And then later it became the teaching because I tried to explain, after a few years later people started coming to me, just casually asking questions. And gradually a spiritual teaching developed, but it's all based on that, disidentification from this continuous stream of thinking that you take to be yourself, but it's no more than a stream of thinking, it's not who you are in essence.

[Speaker 5] (5:01:08 - 5:01:25)

One other thing we know about however it is we are or we act, ultimately we are all affected by where we come from. That sort of sets the table for who we're going to be in the next phase of our life. And I wondered for you to get to that point, what were your folks like?

I never hear about what your childhood was like that would have set these sort of dominoes up for them to come falling down that one night.

[Speaker 1] (5:01:25 - 5:01:54)

Well, the childhood was already unhappy. There was always almost continuous conflict in my parents' marriage. And I was the only child that makes it even more difficult because if you have siblings then you can kind of relate to them.

And so I suffered a lot, I think the beginnings of the deep unhappiness and depression are probably there. But again, I'm glad now that it did happen because otherwise the shift wouldn't have happened.

[Speaker 5] (5:01:54 - 5:02:24)

You know the idea of being in the now, it's something that my friends, they've sort of stopped asking me to be in the now because they recognize it's not a reality for me because so much is like I'm sort of in the now but I'm going here trying this. The one thing we know is that our society is constructed in a way where we have a history and we have things to look forward to. How do you almost approach the unlearning of a people to change the way that this society is built?

This society is built on here's my past, learn from my past. If I don't learn from my past, I'm doomed to repeat the mistakes.

[Speaker 1] (5:02:25 - 5:03:20)

How do you put all that together realizing how society is? Well, this is all true. Of course, it's good to learn from one's past mistakes.

On the other hand, if you identify with your past and your memories and that forms the basis for your sense of self, that becomes a kind of prison. So nothing wrong with learning from the past, but the very essential thing is the realization that your life is

always this moment. Your life is never not this moment.

And whatever you think or experience has to be in the now. So life and now are actually inseparable. It's tomorrow never comes, right?

Yes, when it comes, it's today. As they said in the British pub, there was a sign which said, free beer tomorrow. And that is so unfair to drunks.

[Speaker 5] (5:03:21 - 5:03:34)

That is so unfair to drunk people. You said Tiger Woods lives in the now, right? That Tiger Woods is a great example of the now?

Yes. What's the difference between being in the now and just being simply focused? Because when I watch him golf, he golfs like a man who's chasing something.

[Speaker 1] (5:03:35 - 5:04:26)

So what's the difference between in the now and being focused? I don't think he's chasing anything. I think he is present.

There's a nice story of a Zen master who was watching a sports person perform, and he was watching very closely, and the person wasn't quite making it. And the Zen master observed him and said, the need to win drains him of power. The need, because if you have the need to win, now the West, of course, subscribes to that.

It says you must want to win. But that's not the Eastern way, and I believe that that's the truer way, because the need to win, you project a goal to some future moment. You cannot fully be present in what you do if you have the need to win.

You want to get there.

[Speaker 5] (5:04:26 - 5:04:29)

But if you're a pro athlete, you only have to win, right? That's the challenge.

[Speaker 1] (5:04:29 - 5:04:53)

But the great ones, when they actually perform, when they are, as the expression goes, in the zone, they don't think about winning. They are absolutely and totally present. And so I believe that's where mastery arises, in that state of absolute and complete presence.

There's also a nice film, The Legend of Bagger Vance, where it's about a golfer who learns to be present.

[Speaker 5] (5:04:53 - 5:05:04)

You said that there are certain people or things that are better at being in the now than others. You said animals are great at being in the now, but then you also said women are better at being in the now than men. Is that true?

[Speaker 1] (5:05:05 - 5:06:13)

Yes, to some extent. Women are not quite as much in their head as men. Women tend to be.

They are in their head, too, but not quite as much. They tend to be still a little bit more connected with the body, the energy in the body, with their feelings. So they're not as mind-identified, not quite as, there are of course always exceptions, not quite as mind-identified as men.

And therefore it's a little easier. And so from many talks that I've given, there's always more women than men. This is beginning to change a little bit occasionally now, but still the case.

And the new earth is just taking the idea of the power of now to a much bigger level, right? Yes. New perspectives on it, and elaboration, and also indicating what it is that prevents you from being present.

Structures in your mind, the ego, the identification with the voice in the head, to become aware of that. If you're not aware of it, it will take you over again and again. I know you've got a lot of traveling to do.

When you come back to Canada, please come back on our show.

[Speaker 5] (5:06:14 - 5:06:30)

Thank you. That's what I want to talk about. EckhartTolle.com is his website, and there's a lot more to see with what he's got going on. Of course, he's got them books. Good to see you. Thank you for coming out.

Eckhart Tolle, everybody. Thank you very much for watching the program tonight. There's an awful lot more to come.

Thanks for watching. That's time.

[Speaker 1] (5:07:22 - 6:11:19)

Welcome to our meditative evening. Perhaps meditation. To meditate successfully, the idea that you're doing a meditation can be quite an obstacle.

So maybe that's the first thing we can get rid of tonight. The preconceptions and the expectations that come with that term. So why did we call it guided meditation?

Well, we had to use some word to get you here. Yes. Meditation is usually something that you do, among many other things.

Doing implies all kinds of things. It implies time, even future to some extent. And yet through meditation, if you even want to call it that, it's better not to call it anything, it's not to do with doing.

It's not a doing. It's the realization that you are of being, which underlies all doing. It's prior to all doing.

Thoughts, emotions is prior to that. The simple realization, not the realization who you are, because there can be so many perspectives on that, not the realization how you fit into the totality of the cosmos, how that seemingly little life fleeting existence fits into the totality somewhere. Not realizing how I fit into the whole.

It's impossible to comprehend. But an alignment with the totality, without the need to mentally understand anything, a realization, a simple realization that you are, which is expressed in the sublime words, I am. And if you've missed elementary grammar at school, you might not realize that I am is the first person singular of the verb to be.

You think it's two completely different words. No. The realization that you are, not as a concept, but as a deeper sensing of the life that you are.

The aliveness, the life. And something helpful to realize that is to pretend for one moment that there is no past and no future. Shh.

Shh. Shh. I'm saying pretend so that everybody is still with me.

If I said, if I said there is no past and future, some of you might suddenly start thinking, just a second, aren't you going to sign books in an hour? And the moment you go into thinking, you're off into the realm of mind, the realm of things, object, objects in consciousness. Every thought is an object in consciousness and every thought has a pulling power.

That's why it arises and it pulls your attention in and you start thinking, okay, but there is, I mean, I came here half an hour ago, there must be a past. Not realizing, of course, when you came here, it was the present moment. And when the books are going to be signed, it'll be the present moment because there is nothing else.

Okay, but no need to believe that. Let's pretend. Let's pretend for a moment that there is no past and future.

Okay. Or let's just say, past and future become peripheral to who you are. Oh.

There's only this. Oh. That is the entry point into the realization I am.

Thinking is not required for that realization. In fact, it's a hindrance and you may sense a global feeling of presence or beingness that incorporates what we call the physical body. When you're present, completely present, here, now, you're present, not just with the head, with the totality of your being.

In other words, you sense an aliveness that's there in every cell of the body. That is our meditation, to be present with every cell of the body, a subtle sense of aliveness. In which the personal dimension becomes relatively unimportant.

What arises here is the dimension of conscious presence or consciousness itself. It's spacious. It's...

The moment you start to think, a form arises. Consciousness is born into a form, a thought form. Most human beings on the planet are lost in the forms that arise in their consciousness.

And when I say in their consciousness, that's not entirely correct. Because there is not such a thing as my consciousness, ultimately. There's consciousness.

And I am that. If you use the word expression, my consciousness, this whole language unfortunately operates, you create a duality. And so here's me and there's consciousness.

The same thing happens when you talk or think about my life. And everybody thinks about it a lot of the time. Yeah.

It's amazing how fascinating my life is. And that's such a fundamental error or delusion to say my life, because it implies that you have a life. And that implies that you are separate from life.

There's you and there's life. And you have it. And then of course you start being afraid because you might lose it.

And then what's left of you? So just to see that, to say my life is obviously an illusion because how could you be separate from life? You are life.

You don't have one. And life takes on form. Temporary forms becomes what looks like a physical form.

And on the inner level, life becomes thought forms and emotions and sense perceptions. Forms that consciousness takes is born into continuously, the continuous dance of form. It's amazing spectacle.

Beautiful, wonderful. But it gets heavy and serious when all you know is the forms that consciousness takes. And you never know yourself as consciousness itself.

Being. So we could say the forms that consciousness or life takes, we could call that existence. It stands, exist means to stand out.

Ex means out from Latin. Istans from stans, standing. To stand out.

So whatever arises, sense perceptions, things, thoughts, they exist. First they have a certain lifespan. Come and go.

Entire universe exists. Life forms go in and out of existence. And then there's that which is prior to existence, being.

I am. So the play of form is a beautiful thing. Well, forms are things.

But when that is all you know, you don't know that which underlies the dance of form. Then the dance of form is no longer a dance. It's not fun anymore.

It's not experienced or perceived as a play anymore. It becomes deadly serious. Because that's all you know.

And every form matters. It matters absolutely. You know how worked up people get about things.

Yes. And you can see even people who mentally perhaps realize certain truths. They say I'm beyond things now.

And then suddenly the phone rings. What happened? What?

He broke the contract. He broke the contract. Another word for form, we could just say, the world.

And so the world is the world of things. It's the world of material things, which absorbs many people's, large part of many people's attention. What's the next thing?

They're looking always for the next thing to acquire, to derive satisfaction from, to associate with, to identify with. But things are not just material things. And of course material things are everywhere in our civilization, particularly we are, we are suffocating under proliferation of things and bombarded with messages that we need more things.

But things are also events, you know, forms that arise and they pretend to be all important. And life is not a play anymore. And the older you get, the heavier it gets and the more serious it gets.

You may have noticed in the statues of the Buddha, the Buddha has a slight smile usually, the good ones. There are some bad ones where the Buddha looks serious. But the good ones, there's a hint of a smile.

And then you may ask, why is he smiling? If all is nothingness, as some say, emptiness,

then there's nothing that is there to smile about. The smile arises because the Buddha is in touch with that which is prior to things, to objects, to form, to the world.

Not because he has made it in the world. He's not smiling because somebody has just given him a garden for his monks and nuns to walk in. He's not smiling.

He is in touch with that which is prior to all things. We could call that that if things are objects that arise in the field of consciousness, then consciousness itself could best be described as space, a sense of spaciousness or space in your life, which doesn't exist as your life by just using language. Space, consciousness, which is not a term from science fiction, but refers to the realization that space is the essence of who you are, the spaciousness of simple being.

And your entire life experience is determined by whether or not and how much space there is in your life. And for many humans on the planet, there's no space. It's not that the space isn't there.

It cannot be destroyed, done away with, but they don't know it's there. All they know is the forms. Someone could say, all they know is the dimension of waves and ripples on the surface of life.

That's the world, experiences, events, sense perceptions, drama, thoughts, emotions, ripples. Ripples on the surface of life itself. And I am life.

I am the one life. I speak for each one of you as the I am. That which I am is life itself.

It takes on a temporary form and it's beautiful. It's a continuous stepping back from the seduction of things. It's not that you reject things, but you stay, you can remain conscious of consciousness while you participate in the dance.

How does that look in practice? Somebody comes, says, oh, you know what just happened? This and this and this.

In other words, lost in things, the world of things, and it matters, each thing matters absolutely. You know, this. Okay.

And now there's the possibility either you get drawn into that and react on the same level and fuel that dimension. What could be, what are we going to do now? Or you can be there, while that person speaks, you can be there as an alert, aware presence in which the words are being received.

Oh, okay. There's an alertness there. You're not, haven't gone to sleep.

But you're in fact much more awake than you would be if you were reacting. You just, oh, that's well, okay. And for a moment, there's a space in which this thing happens, the person is talking.

And then you will find yourself saying something or doing something, and it will be appropriate. And while you say or do something, there's still a connectedness with the underlying field. It's a global thing, it's the entire being.

A connectedness with the underlying field out of which the doing comes or out of which the words come. Speak. Much more intelligent, certainly the words that come out of the field, which really is the field of pure intelligence, consciousness itself, will be much more relevant, much more powerful, much more intelligent than anything that could come out of the conditioned reactive mind.

And another thing that comes with it is, there's always when you're in touch with the I am, you could call it other ways, other words, you can call it stillness, beingness, presence. That is also the realm of peace. That is the realm out of which peaceful action can come.

Words, peaceful words, words that have the energy carry still a fragrance of that state of being. Action also can carry that fragrance. Creation, you can create something out of that state like a work of art or whatever it may be or a little simple object.

And whatever comes out of the state of connectedness with being, and don't trust words, they're never quite right. You are not connected with being because you are being but we have to use words. Out of that state of connectedness with being, whatever comes out of that has a beauty to it, has a power to it, has a quality.

And it may just be the quality of a simple gesture or the quality of a step, it doesn't matter what it is. So that's really the purpose of life while you are here in this form is to be in the two dimensions, one could say, don't, this is nothing final here, the two dimensions of, there's the dimension of the world and there's the dimension of being or presence which is the unmanifested or other words that you might want to use. And the art of living is to be in the world, participate to the extent that you want to or is required of you.

And as the old expression goes, to be in the world, but not off it. It's an old Christian expression. So the world, which is the world of things, which includes thoughts because every thought is an object, it has a form, a thought form.

The world of things, including your mind, no longer has the power to draw you in completely and you no longer give it this absolute reality. It is the world of the relative. It helps greatly if you can become friendly with the present moment because being can only be realized of course, in the present moment.

And the delusion is that something is happening in this moment that prevents me from being, from being myself, from being present, still at peace. In love, it all goes together because all love can only arise from that dimension. The delusion that the present

moment is some kind of obstacle to where I really want to go or be.

And that's a very common, it's so widespread that it dominates many people's lives entirely. The delusion that the present moment is some kind of obstacle in my way. That's not, they don't say that or don't think that, but they live like that.

If you said it or thought it, you would immediately say, this must be insane. But if that becomes your daily experience, that almost always that the present moment is, okay, where's the next thing? Because this isn't it, this can't be it.

I'm looking for some, for more, something more, but not this. The more could be anything, could be the tiniest thing because life consists of the succession of the tiniest things. The great things happen rarely.

And once they pass, then we're back to the tiny things. So it's the tiniest things. There's, for example, the belief that once your child has brushed his, his or her teeth, it'll be okay.

Okay. And after then, of course, there's something else that's needed. There's always the next thing that you need to get to in the unconscious belief, because if you make it conscious, you'll see the absurdity of it.

In the unconscious belief that there is something there for you in the next moment or the one after that. And so the present moment, all there ever is, becomes a means to an end, no more. The end is the next moment.

And what is the next moment? The future moment? A thought in your head.

That's its only reality. Is that true? It must be true because nobody's ever touched or smelled or seen the future.

It's always only a thought in your head. And so you live for a thought in your head. That is the mind-obsessed, mind-dominated, mind-possessed state.

Could also be called egoic state because ego means to be totally identified with a mind-made sense of self. And every thought, which many thoughts are about the next moment, the future, every thought draws your attention in so completely that you identify with it. And so identify means it becomes invested with a sense of self.

That's the great delusion. So you're looking for yourself somewhere in that realm because in some future moment, there's the hope that things will be okay. I can finally relax.

Of course, it never comes because it's the future. It never comes. So here, becoming friendly with the present moment and stop treating it as an enemy or run away from it or use it, okay, as a stepping stone.

You are here, but you want to be there. You can look, almost everybody on TV looks like that. It sounds almost too simple, becoming friendly with the present moment and all kinds of things happen in the present moment.

The form that it takes changes continuously. The present moment itself remains as space. And then in that space, something happens.

And the secret to life is to be internally aligned with the form that this moment, the only moment there ever is, takes. Instead of rejecting the form that this moment takes or devalue it and make it into a means to an end. Internally aligned means yes.

You say yes to what is. Your child hasn't brushed his or her teeth yet. That's what is.

Why don't you brush your teeth now? There's a different way of doing things. You know, you tell me, well, you haven't experienced, I have four children, and it's.

There is another way of doing things that honors life, which is now, and only in honoring life, in saying yes to the form that this moment takes, can you go beyond that in yourself, which is beyond form. If you react against the form that this moment takes, you will continue to be trapped in form, a form identity, a me that feels stronger every time it reacts against something. The me gets stronger in every no to what is.

Every time you can, you argue with what is, you complain about what is, the little me, that is a mental formation, feels stronger for a while. And then you have to look for the next thing to argue with. So the secret is the form that this moment takes often looks like a limitation on your freedom.

It may look like a limitation on your life, one way or another. You're sitting in an office, but you don't want to be there. You're in a traffic jam, but you don't want to be there.

So that's a limitation. Your partner is getting obnoxious, so that's a limitation. There's always something that says, I want to be free, I want to be fully myself, not this.

And that keeps you trapped. It's only when you bring a yes to the form that this moment takes, that's to do with the manifested world. The world of manifestation is producing the form that this moment takes.

As an event, a person wanting something, whatever it may be, a situation, a place, that's the form. And you may say, what, doesn't make sense, I don't want this, but it is. And whatever is, is part of the totality.

The entire universe has brought about the form that this moment takes, otherwise it couldn't be. Everything is totally interconnected. Now, you may not be able to see how these things are interconnected.

Why should I be stuck in this traffic jam right now? Does it make sense? What is the

purpose in that?

It shouldn't be, but yet it is. And if you become internally aligned with the form, which a moment ago looked like an obstacle, but now you say, well, it is, it is, there it is. With that, space, the dimension of space within yourself, which is being, opens up because you haven't made yourself smaller by reacting against the form.

You haven't trapped yourself in a form identity by reacting against some form that this moment takes. So by saying yes to the form that is, and in some cases, it is truly from a conventional viewpoint, one would say, this is terrible. Why, how could this happen to a human being or to me?

How can this happen to me? Yes, I don't, this is not what I want. It's awful.

It could be a serious, an illness, whatever, great loss, collapse, somebody close to you dies, goes away, leaves you. Forms are not reliable in this world. They are fleeting.

That includes the human form. Even the seemingly solid structures are not really that solid. They just look solid.

Talk to a physicist, he'll tell you they are not solid at all. And sometimes you realize they are not solid. So suddenly something crumbles, a form crumbles.

Form and the formless. And you cannot find the dimension of the formless as long as you are battling against the world of form. I want freedom.

I want to find myself and I can't find myself sitting in front of this computer screen. I can't find myself having to clean this right now. I don't want to be doing something meaningful.

I want to, you're missing something, not something, you're missing that which is concealed underneath the form that this moment takes. And that's easy to do. And that's the great deception that most humans are subject to.

What they are looking for in some future moment is already here, hiding in the most unlikely place called the present moment. What is it that they are looking for? What is it that they're looking for?

But all the people that are running around like rabbits or whatever in the cities, there must be some purpose. Where are they all running to? What is their purpose?

And they all have, even if they want more money or they want more of this or more of that, hiding behind that, there's always, they want to be more fully themselves. They want to feel a sense of security, of aliveness. They want to be more fully who they are.

They want to, they're looking for themselves. They're looking for the ultimate sense of

being rootedness, of saying, yes, I have arrived. I'm fully myself now.

Secure. And they are looking through this or that or that. They try to get there, not realizing that they can't.

It's been hiding all along underneath the seemingly unsatisfactory form that this moment takes. So you come, it's a completely different way to live, the alignment with the suchness of this moment. It's only then, that is the true meditation.

You then, space arises when the form is not resisted. Space, a difficult situation, an unpleasant place, whatever it may be, somebody screaming, this or that, that's what is. And then there's, it's still there, but there is a dimension of depth to what is that frees you from being totally dependent on the world of form.

And from that space, you see, it comes with allowing, allowing is the key. Allow this moment and suddenly space is there because through saying yes to what is, immediately an inner spaciousness arises. And out of that spaciousness, action can come.

Out of that spaciousness, words can come. Or out of that spaciousness, nothing may come. It may just remain as spaciousness, which is beautiful too.

Very effective action can come out of that. And out of that spaciousness comes the recognition that every life form that comes into your field of consciousness is really an aspect of the one life, a temporary form that the one life, the one consciousness that you are has taken. And that recognition, or maybe it's a flower, it's a tree, it's a cloud, it's another human being, it's the cat, it's a pebble, a stone, a wall, a chair, whether we call it alive or inanimate, doesn't matter.

Everything is alive. And everything is a form of life. And the essence is life itself, beingness, presence.

Some great artists have looked at a relatively, an ordinary landscape. Nobody would have looked at it twice. And they looked and then they took up the brush and then there was a, when the painting was finished, yes, it was a picture of that landscape, but it also had the fragrance of that which is beyond form that was there as the backdrop, the background to the sense perception of the artist.

There was a true looking against a field of alert, aware stillness. Then it became a painting. And then even, not immediately perhaps, but at some point, even humans who hadn't perhaps not, perhaps almost completely trapped in form, recognized something in that painting.

I couldn't quite say what. And so it became what they call great art. Somebody was able to look at the world of form so deeply that the formless became part of the perception.

And that is not, this is meant to be our normal state. To bring that dimension into this world of form, that which transcends the personal, because everything that is personal about you pertains to the world of form. My past, my thoughts, my opinions, my viewpoints of who I am, who others are, what I know or think I know, my story, my future.

All form, and it's all destined to dissolve fairly quickly as all forms do. Pop, boop, soap bubbles. Oh, where is it?

It's gone. Oh, of course, it can't be. They don't, the amazing thing is they don't teach yet at school that forms dissolve quickly.

That could be lesson one. And every child would see it. Oh yes.

They don't teach it. They teach other things, which they say are more important or important matters. This matter is to do with the world of things.

Don't look for the significant in your life at some future moment. When am I going to make it? When am I going to be recognized?

When am I finally going to get that sense of security that can only come when you have a certain amount of money in the bank? When is my story finally going to turn into a happy and satisfying one? I'm waiting.

I'm waiting for my life to become significant. And you miss the depth because the depth is in each moment or rather the one, the only moment there is. And your life becomes very significant when you bring the inner yes to the present moment.

Then something arises in you that is beyond the form that perhaps looks as if it were an obstacle, but it is. The truth of this is expressed in mythologically in the image of the cross. Somebody surrenders to the most dreadful situation, pain, suffering, and somebody surrenders to that.

So at first, the cross is the greatest obstacle to finding yourself, to being yourself, to life. It seems to deny that there's any meaning to life. Now the cross stands for anything, loss, death, and it'll come into everybody's life, of course.

And then there comes this thing, well, this is the form of this moment. And suddenly there's a peace in the background that suddenly is there in the most dreadful situation externally. And so the cross becomes suddenly an opening that works with little things and suddenly works with big things.

The actor who played Superman died yesterday. He experienced a dreadful accident, broke his neck, couldn't move anymore. He also experienced a certain degree of surrender in the years after that.

And even a certain peace one could see. It became an opening. And so they said something beautiful in the news.

He truly became Superman only after the accident. From a conventional viewpoint, it would be an irony. In the film, he flies, and in reality, he's confined to a wheelchair.

But the true Superman is in the wheelchair. He also said something, they showed an interview. That was, he gave it one year ago.

He talked about the accident. He said, I was one, when I was riding, I was always completely one with the horse. We were a oneness.

And he said, but at that moment, I got distracted by a thought. And I lost the present moment. And then the accident happened.

Then he said, you see how important the present moment is? How important, how precious the present moment is, because it is life itself. It is inseparable from the very being that you are.

And knowing that is the art of living in this world. Remembering you are not what happens, because people get so drawn into what happens. You're not what happens, and you're not what you do, because that's what life consists of.

Things happen to you. That's the passive experience of life. And then you react, or you do things, that's the active.

And that's, for most humans, that's all there is. They're dependent on what happens to them and on the doing, what they do. So there's what happens, what's the next thing that's going to happen?

I'm hoping that it'll be good. Underneath the hope, there's the fear that it'll be bad. What happens and what you do are only relatively important, not absolutely.

Absolutely important is whether you are aligned with life at this moment. That is your purpose, to live, to learn, to live in that way here on this earth as this temporary form is your purpose, to learn that. And what you do doesn't matter.

The success of your life is not determined by what the world tells you is successful. The world doesn't know it. The world is completely lost.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. Are you aligned with life? With being, with yourself, with the now, so one.

And then what you do externally is secondary. How you do it is what matters. Whether you, six, seven, eight hours a day, you move dishes or whatever you do, then it flows into that.

Being flows into that. Or if whatever you do, it seems incompatible with being, you will find yourself very quickly removed. Life removes you.

Oh, the boss calls you in and says, we don't need you anymore. We don't want peaceful people here. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. Or he says, you're the only person not suffering from a stress-related disease. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

You are not doing your job. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. Some of the structures of this mad world can perhaps be transformed from within.

in other structures of this mad world, you simply leave or they collapse by themselves. And there's wisdom is required for you to know, but that's easy because wisdom is, the place of wisdom is accessing the present moment, alert, still, present, and you watch and you listen. You watch and listen, even if there's nothing to listen to.

As one Zen master would often call his disciples by their name, Mary, yes, master? Nothing. Didn't.

John, yes? Nothing. To simply call them out of identification with the stream of thinking into presence, into stillness, into alert awareness.

He doesn't, you don't have to fill it with something, it's space itself. So he called them into that state, and there was nothing, he didn't have to put anything into it. Why fill it up?

There'll be enough things that will go into space, there are all kinds of things will go, oh, oh. But you don't have to hang on so much anymore, you can, they enter your space, space, not yours, you are space, so it's not your space. Things enter space and then they leave, okay.

Experiences, events, people. And you remain as space, the background. So the foreground is the world, the foreground is the world of things, the world of thinking, the world of emotions, coming, going, that's the foreground of your life that most people are completely lost in, and then there's the background.

The Buddha smile is, I would call the background smile. This was expressed in an extreme form by the teacher Krishnamurti who once said in a talk, do you want to know my secret? And of course, everybody wanted to know his secret, they'd been coming for 30 years to listen to him.

And he said, this is it, my secret. I don't mind what happens. I don't know how many people got it.

Amazing, and of course we understand what that means, no, but I don't mind what

happens. I'm not what happens and I'm not looking for myself in what happens, I am not what happens, nor am I looking for myself in what happens. I am this place in which it happens, not what happens.

I am presence, I am consciousness, I am life. Temporarily appearing as a form of life. So the dance of the forms of life is actually quite beautiful when you don't mind what happens anymore because you welcome what happens, because what happens is the present moment.

And it's not serious, thank you.

[Speaker 4] (6:12:00 - 6:15:36)

Hello everyone, welcome. I'm Rich Fernandez from the learning and development team here at Google. So about six months ago, we wrote a letter to Eckhart Tolle inviting him to come here to Google.

Eckhart, dude, come to Google, we said. Well, something along those lines. We make some of the world's most valued and most used technology.

We aspire to do epic stuff and to make a difference in the world. And yet, even as we create this dazzling technology, we wanna be sure to pay attention to our own inner technology. We wanna ask ourselves the searching and far ranging questions about how we're getting on in the world.

As we optimize our technology, how can we also optimize our lives so that we can be our best selves? All of this is a lot easier said than done. We operate in a hyper-connected world, always on, and we go at it with great pace and intensity.

The urgent question of the day is how we can take an intelligent approach to our work and our lives with all of the demands of our time and attention. Amidst this flood of information, how can we discern the signal from the noise in order to access and act on what is most essential to each of us? Eckhart Tolle takes a refreshingly contemporary approach to the question of what it means to live a meaningful and inspired life and with great intelligence.

And in so being, how we can each experience a great sense of clarity, peace, and the joy of being alive. So we're very lucky that Eckhart accepted our invitation and said yes to come here today. He knows our ethos, that we have a profound interest in being our best selves and doing meaningful and inspired work.

We seek to change the world for the better. And he understands that we understand that in order to transform the world, we must first render the necessary transformation within ourselves. So Eckhart is here today to assist and suggest with some things for us to consider.

Eckhart Tolle has written best-selling books including *The Power of Now* and *A New Earth*. And they've sold millions of copies worldwide and have been translated into 33 languages. He is widely regarded as one of the foremost teachers on the subject of wisdom and conscious living.

Joining Eckhart in conversation today is our Vice President of Product, Bradley Horowitz. Now, when we proposed to Bradley that he might engage in a dialogue with Eckhart as part of this Tech Talk, he was really excited, which makes sense because Bradley's cool like that. Bradley also helped create Google+, Google Apps, and Google+, which we all love.

So without further ado, please join me in welcoming Eckhart Tolle and Bradley Horowitz as they discuss what it means to live with meaning, purpose, and wisdom in the digital age.

[Speaker 3] (6:15:50 - 6:16:45)

So on behalf of Google and all the many Googlers here and those tuning in from our overflow rooms, welcome, it's great to have you here. And it's very special to have you here. I understand that you don't often visit corporations.

And so this has been a journey we've taken together over the course of the day. Eckhart had a moment to meet with some of us earlier. And we found that really valuable.

And one of the things we discussed this morning was wisdom and the difference between information and wisdom. Google has a mission to organize the world's information. And I think if you think about the hierarchy, there's signal and data and information and knowledge.

And at the very top of the pyramid is wisdom. And I wondered if you could comment a little bit on what you understand to be the difference between information and wisdom.

[Speaker 1] (6:16:46 - 6:19:03)

Good question. Let's set that aside for just one moment to say how happy I am to be here, how impressed I am by what I have seen and by the people who work here and the general energy field in the company. And if you have come, many young people here, if you've come straight from college, then I'm sure you don't know how lucky you are until you start working for another company.

But perhaps everybody who works here, one would, as they would say in India, you must have very good karma to be working here. And the openness of people that's reflected in the structure of the company, the way things are arranged, the little rooms that you have for quietness, for meditation, the cafeterias, and all that is just beyond belief. So I also experience an openness in the people who work here and far less ego because

many companies are still predominantly run by very big egos.

I'm not saying that everybody here is entirely free of ego yet, but much less so than in many other places. So it's wonderful to be here. And if my book sales ever decline and I need a job, I hope you will, you probably won't, but because first of all, I have no computer skills.

And secondly, I'm too old. Since the average age here is probably about 30. So your question was important.

I remember it, I remember it.

[Speaker 5] (6:19:03 - 6:19:04)

I don't.

[Speaker 1] (6:19:09 - 6:38:32)

Knowledge, information, and wisdom, how do they relate? Of course, with the technological revolution, information revolution, digital revolution, whatever you call it, there's an enormous amount of knowledge available to everybody, almost the whole of the world's knowledge. And there's the interconnectedness between people and so on.

That's all very good, of course, to have all that accessible to you. There's a danger, though, that you get drowned in too much information and too much knowledge. And by drowned, I mean that the mind gets bombarded with an excess of input.

And therefore, you miss something that is essential for a human life to be truly fulfilled. And that is a place of peace, inner peace or stillness, a place that one could describe as the source of all intelligence that many people don't actually, don't even realize exists within them. So I'd like to just talk briefly about that, that really we're talking about the core of what spirituality means.

Spirituality is not having a particular belief structure, is not subscribing to a particular set of thoughts, spirituality is discovering a dimension within yourself that is, we can either say deeper or higher than the continuous movement of thinking. And of course, all this information and knowledge is experienced in you as thought. So the thinking mind has always been active for many thousands of years in humans, but now it's even more active than before because it gets energized by the incredible increase in input before all you had was simple, the simple sensory input in your immediate surroundings.

Then later came books, so you have the added input of that. And then gradually came the mass media and now this incredible revolution of information technology, computers and so on. So it energizes that movement of thought that's taking place in every human, which in itself is not necessarily a bad thing, it only becomes a bad thing and self-

destructive thing if that is all you experience inside you in your consciousness.

If all you ever experience is that, I call it sometimes mental noise, then you begin to derive your identity from the thoughts in your head, what the thoughts tell you about yourself. And you are trapped in that identity that is based on identification with thinking. All spiritual teachings point to the possibility of finding something in you that is deeper than thinking, a space, a stillness that's always there.

And the informational excess of information you can only successfully deal with that if you have a balance in your consciousness between using your mind to absorb information, to put out new information, to work on the information that you have taken in, input. If you have a balance between that and something that is deeper than thought in you. And really, instead of giving you new knowledge here, I don't want to do that because I don't want to add to the knowledge that you're taking in anyway, far more than you ever need.

So instead of giving you knowledge here, I'd like to suggest that you experience at first hand in yourself that place of, I call it sometimes a presence, where you are alert, conscious, but not thinking. And every creative person has some access to that realm. If you have a truly creative insight, you have to go to that place that is deeper than analytical thinking.

Analytical thinking itself, or processing information is not creative. So even to find a creative, a new solution to a problem in your life requires some creative insight. So whether it's a problem in your work situation or your personal life, or something that you need to build or do and you have come to a dead end, or you want to create something, whatever it is, a work of art or a new system for the computer, I don't know the expressions for that, you need to go to the place where creativity arises.

And every human who is creative has some access to that, even if they don't know it. But it's not only the place where creativity arises, it's also the place that gives sanity to your life, to find a place of stillness, peace, aliveness, where you are not burdened by most, a lot of the time, unnecessary mental noise. So when you do start thinking again, it actually can be more productive.

So where is that place? How do you find that place if it's there in everyone? How do I realize that within myself?

That's really the question. I can just suggest to you three or four entry points into that state of consciousness. And after I've done that, we can carry on the conversation.

A very simple entry point, and this is why my first book is called *The Power of Now*, is the realization that your entire life consists of the present moment and only the present moment ever. Now, most people, perhaps in some abstract way, they know that, but

they cannot sense or feel the truth of that. And I'd like to invite you to actually sense and feel the truth of what I'm saying, which no, not, even if there's a great philosopher here, he cannot possibly argue, he or she cannot argue with this statement that whatever you experience whatsoever is present moment.

There isn't, your entire life unfolds in the present moment. That's all you ever have. Most people don't live as if this were true.

They don't, they live as if the opposite almost were true, as if the future moment were more important always than the next one. And that is, that happens because of excessive identification with thinking, because usually the thoughts are about the next thing, the next, and the next, or what could happen or might happen. So if you can just come to this realization, well, this is all, all I ever have and ever experience is this moment.

This is undoubtedly true. There is nothing else ever. And at that moment, when you fully realize that, you can only realize that an alertness arises in you.

Wow. You become alert to, one could almost call it, the presence of the power of this moment, of the power of life itself in this present moment, which consists of, yes, it consists of sense perceptions. It also consists of, well, let's look, what is this present moment?

This present moment is this room, what we perceive here, what we visually, what we see here, the lights, the totality of the room. So let's become alert so that we can really perceive that. And beyond that which we perceive in this room, is there anything else about that we could call the present moment?

Well, if you look deeply enough, yes, there is also the inner energy field in your body that you can actually feel, that you're alive in your legs, your arms, your feet. That's also part of the present moment, to sense the energy field that pervades the physical body. That's also something you can feel.

So there's external sense perceptions and there's the feeling, the aliveness inside your body. And if you're totally in thinking, you can't feel that at all. You don't feel alive.

You're only alive in the upper story of the house, your head. The entire house, you don't inhabit then. So you inhabit, you begin to inhabit the entire body.

This becomes part of your experience of the present moment. So sense perceptions, yes. And there is an aliveness even to artificial light.

Of course, you might say I prefer sunlight. OK, me too. But there's a beauty and aliveness even to artificial light.

And there's a beauty and aliveness that is usually overlooked that's in the texture of this arm, this chair here, or whatever you're wearing, and certainly the flowers. And suddenly you become aware of that. And that's not all yet.

We're just going into the present moment. So you have that, externals, and you suddenly appreciate the aliveness of all the things that surround you. Other people have to take acid to get there.

So you don't need that. You know with acid people, sometimes they look at a teapot and they say, wow. Oh, my God.

But you don't need to do that. Just be present and then you appreciate the beauty even of a mass-produced teapot. If it's handmade and hand-painted, even nicer.

But even a mass-produced teapot has a presence there. It's there and it's an alive energy field. Every physicist will tell you it's not a dead teapot.

It's molecules and atoms in continuous movement. Everything is vitally alive and you miss that if you're totally trapped in the mental noise all the time, taking in information. Present moment, sense perceptions, so the inner energy field of the body.

And then what else is there to the present moment? Then you have to go, become really alert. And the next thing that you notice about the present moment is really the deeper level of the present moment.

It's not something that arises in your consciousness as does the table and this room and even the inner energy field of the body. These are all things, objects that arise in your consciousness. But if you go deeper even into the present moment, what you encounter is the most incredible secret of human life, which is you encounter the fact that at the bottom of it all, you are conscious.

There is the presence that you are without which you couldn't perceive anything. You couldn't perceive this room and you couldn't feel the body without that consciousness that you essentially are, which Jesus, by the way, called the light of the world. He said to his disciples, you are the light of the world.

And these disciples were not special people. They were fishermen, so certainly he wasn't telling them that they are VIPs. They were the opposite of VIPs and yet he said, you are the light of the world.

He also said it about himself, but he also said it about others. And so you suddenly discover that essentially, at the most essential level, the essence of who you are is consciousness. But consciousness isn't something you can say, ah, there it is.

Because consciousness cannot become an object to itself. It's the eternal subject. The I

am that I am of the Old Testament where when God is asked for his or her name, God says, I am that I am.

That is the essential identity of all beings. So when we talk about the present moment, we talk about different levels of the present moment from sense perceptions to the feeling of aliveness in the inner body to the realization that ultimately what we call the present moment and the light of consciousness are one and the same because that's the thing that always remains. And that consciousness, you can sense it as yourself right now, the presence that you are, even beyond the physical presence.

And that is the alertness, that is the realization that is sometimes called awakening. And that is the place of also of stillness where you get out of the mental noise. And that is the source place of creativity.

That is intelligence that is non-conceptual. It's primordial intelligence. And if you touch that in yourself, then at first as glimpses, as brief realizations and then gradually integrated into your daily life, then you can live from that place, the source, and be a, not only a more productive human being, but also a more peaceful human being because then you no longer contribute to the conflict in this world because the conflict is only created by all those humans who don't know that level in themselves. They don't know who they are.

And again, to call Jesus again, on the cross he said, forgive them, they know not what they do. And why do they know not what they do? They don't know who they are, essentially.

So this, I've talked about this and in the hope that as I'm speaking, there is a, an experience in you of really of what the depths of the present moment. Because the present moment, people think its present moment is what happens. And of course, because what happens changes all the time, people say there are many present moments.

If you look more deeply, of course, there are not many present moments. There's only ever this present moment. There's only this ever.

So there are not many present moments. There's only the space of this moment. So there's what happens in it and there is the space in which it happens and that space is consciousness.

And that is who you are. And when you realize that, you become free of the false sense of self which, that when your mind tells you something about who you are, which has to do with your history and your successes or your failures or what other people tell you who you are, a little present. So that's really basically the essence of spirituality, which is very simple, but for some reason, it's not taught at school.

All kinds of inessential things are taught at school. But what really matters, the very foundation of human life, and it's not some belief structure. I'm not saying indoctrinate children, that children must believe.

It's not belief at all. It's an experience. It's a realization.

That's what needs to be taught. That needs to be subject number one at school. Who am I?

And everything else is easy once you have that. Q Well, I'm not sure I have any more questions.

[Speaker 3] (6:38:37 - 6:39:35)

We'll press on. I want to ask you about the work that we do at Google. And if you look at any given web page, it's almost a model of the mind.

There's all of these jumping off points. You can jump to this story or that story or Hawaii vacation. You can jump around so easily.

And in fact, the product I work on, Google+, allows me not only to examine the contents of my own mind, but all of these people's minds as well in a flood of a stream coming at me. And I'm wondering if the real reason you've chosen to come to Google today is because we're actively working against you. And you've come to help us get over that.

But more seriously, do you think there's a place for technology? And how do you make sense of the work that we're doing and how it impacts people's attention in relation to what you just described, sort of transcending the mind and going to a deeper place?

[Speaker 1] (6:39:36 - 6:54:11)

Well, it's, this, the technology is quite miraculous, of course. In itself, it's neither good nor bad. The, I only recently, which means like two or three years, started using it.

I came to it very late. I've, I still haven't developed an addiction to it, as many people have. There is a, there are incredible possibilities here with that technology.

And there's also a great danger with that technology. It could lead to contribute to the awakening. And an example of that is our gathering here, which people can apparently see on their screen.

So, this is just one example of how this technology can contribute to spreading a vital message. It goes far beyond any ideology or anything like that. The same thing, the work I did with Oprah some years ago, for the first time, the webinar, as they call it, went out and the whole, the first time, the whole system broke down because so many people tuned in.

And then, the second week, it started to work. We, we don't have that problem. So, there are incredible possibilities also for humans to connect with each other.

Well, that's another topic, how they really, whether they're really connecting as human beings. But also, that the fact that the flow of information is no longer monopolized by the powerful few corporations, but everybody can participate in that free flow of information, having led already to all these things, the Arab Spring and all those things that have been happening recently, all that is potentially good. The, the danger, of course, is, and again, that connects with what I've been talking about earlier, is that you get more and more inundated with, with information, with knowledge, with mind stuff, so that you more and more lose a deeper sense of connectedness with being, with presence, that deeper level that I talked about just now.

And that would then lead to increasing confusion in your mind and an inability, really, to create anything new anymore. You would be just trapped in the mental, continuously increasing mental noise. And if you look at people in this field who do come up with something really creative that is new, they all have some access to that deeper level in themselves, as I'm sure many of you have, and quite a few people don't even know that they have access to that.

It just happens. They become still, and they go for a moment or a few, they go, and you, you connect with the power inside you. You, you can actually feel that, the power of consciousness inside you as you become still.

And, and there's no mind movement in that. It's a kind of open and listening that, that opens up. And then, after a while, the mind starts working again.

And it's very often, then you have an answer, or then you have the creative solution or some new insight. But if you don't go there anymore, if you, you get continuously drawn only into the, into the, the noise, the mental noise, then you lose touch with the, your own power and you become more and more confused. And it could easily happen that what now looks like miraculous technology could, within two generations, could lead, I'm not saying that it will, and we are here now so there's hope, it could lead to a complete breakdown of civilization.

So here you have this miraculous technology and two generations later, all humans walk around like zombies. It could happen. It's an idea for a science fiction novel perhaps.

But it could happen because it's neither good nor bad. If we are not careful, it could draw us in to such an extent that we lose ourselves in our own creation, that we have created something that's an old mythological theme. We create a kind of entity that becomes a monster and then our own creation devours us.

That could happen. It doesn't have to happen. So this is, I believe, why I've come here,

as a little warning.

If you're not careful, then what looks so wonderful here could turn out to be a monster, but it doesn't have to be. It could turn out into something, turn into something wonderful that contributes to the awakening of humanity. We need to recognize its dangers.

The danger is that this screen that you look at, of course, connects with your mind. It links into your mind and then you link into the collective mind on the screen and it grows and grows. The noise grows and grows and you become more and more confused and completely uncentered.

You walk around, I mean, youngsters, there are youngsters who are so addicted to their screen, they can't give attention anymore to another human being, to their parents or others. There's always something, okay. What?

I have an iPhone, I have to hide this here. That's the, why it's so vital. So what, if you work with your screen all the time, then what do you do?

You have to recognize the danger and you have to give yourself some space many times during the day, even if it's just for one minute at a time. Give yourself space so that a balance arises between that interaction with the screen, which is the collective mind, and connectedness with being is the way we could put it. So I suggest, I sometimes suggest to people to put a flower or a potted flower next to their computer screen so that from time to time they look at that for half a minute, even a few seconds.

And really look or learn to take a breath, a conscious in and out breath. Let's call that a mini meditation. Meditation is very helpful for many people, not for everybody.

If you find it hard to meditate, use mini meditations. One mini meditation is one conscious breath. What does that mean, conscious breath?

It means you look away from the screen. If you can, look at something natural, a plant or the sky, but if not, that's fine. Look at a light, artificial light, whatever it is, and breathe in and follow the breath with your attention into the body and then follow it with your attention as it flows out of the body.

What does that do? It takes attention away from thought and puts it into the body. In other words, it creates a space in your consciousness because while you are following the breath with your attention, you are not thinking.

And when you are not thinking but you haven't gone to sleep, you've created a space in your consciousness and there, that's it. So that's just one conscious breath occasionally. Two is even better, or three, but that's fine.

That's enough. And of course, that's the oldest, one of the oldest forms of meditation is

conscious breath, probably already recommended by the Buddha who is supposed to have said, just be conscious of your breath for one hour and you'll be totally enlightened. But if you miss just one, you have to go back to the beginning.

And feeling the inner body. If you don't have, nature is very helpful to take you out of your mind, although many people walk around nature and they're still in their minds. But if you can interact with the natural world, the trees, the park, the beach, the mountain, the forest, walking occasionally and pay attention, truly pay attention to what you see without interpreting, that can bring you into connectedness with being and into the present moment.

Your dog, a wonderful thing I noticed here, people are allowed to bring their dogs. That makes an enormous difference to the energy field, not to every home and to the company. When you interact with a dog, there's a moment when you're not actually thinking.

That's why it feels so good, because you know the dog is not thinking about you. Although you might have heard the saying, please God, make me into the person that my dog thinks I am, the fact is the dog isn't thinking. That's why the dog relates to you with unconditional love, because the dog doesn't judge you.

And you know that the dog doesn't judge you and therefore the dog does not stimulate your thinking mind. It actually frees you for a moment from your thinking mind. That's why people love, when there's many people, unless you have a phobia, that's a different matter, most people love interacting with a dog, cats also, but let's talk about dogs because they're here in the company.

So when you pet a dog or even just look at a dog and the tail wags, there's something liberating there for a moment and that's why humans respond to the dog and you go, oh. If you look very closely inside yourself, at that moment, there's a moment when you're not thinking, when you're interacting with a dog, unless you're so obsessed with your mind that you immediately judge the dog. That can happen too, I've met people like that.

But for most people, it's a liberating thing because the dog is nature in its beauty and aliveness, has not arrived yet at the stage of thought that humans have had to go through. So it's, you experience that aliveness of nature in the dog. So, OK, you have that and you have, and if you don't have a dog, that's fine too.

You can feel nature as the inner energy field in your body. And you can even practice on the computer screen while you're looking at something, see if you can be in two dimensions at the same time while you are looking. Don't do it at first when there's something extremely demanding, just when there's something kind of routine thing you're checking on the screen.

And see if you, while you're looking, you can feel the inner energy field of your body as you do perhaps now in the background, so to speak. I recommend that as a kind of meditation. You can practice it when the screen, nothing is happening on the screen first.

Or put a flower on the screen and look at that and see if you can at the same time feel the aliveness in your energy field that keeps you rooted in being. And then you don't lose yourself totally in the collective mind that comes at you through the screen. That's a beautiful, I highly recommend that.

Put a little reminder on your computer screen, a little thing that says inner body or whatever else you want to call it so that you remember. And you will find you're more energized. It's extremely energizing to sense that, to be connected with that.

And so that one could call that the balance between doing and being in your life. Because thinking is part of doing. Doing is not just what you do physically.

Doing, thinking, is also a kind of doing. But the human needs the two dimensions, being and doing. And if that balance is lost, you could lose it in being, but that's not the danger of our civilization.

There may be some Indian yogis who get lost in being and don't want to get up anymore because they're so happy in being that there's no need to get up anymore, even put food in their mouth. That's fine. I'm not talking to them.

I would have to have a different message for them. But I'm talking to this civilization, people who are lost or who get too much doing, which really is thinking, there the balance is between being and doing. And even if it's not, doesn't have to be 50-50, 20 percent, it's hard to put a figure to it.

[Speaker 3] (6:54:11 - 6:54:12)

You like to measure things.

[Speaker 1] (6:54:12 - 6:54:29)

I know, yeah. So 25 percent being, 75 percent doing, and you're doing very well. Even 10 percent being would make your life much easier and much more enjoyable.

[Speaker 3] (6:54:32 - 6:54:42)

I want to remind the Googlers this dual presence technique of being and doing. Please don't do that while coding on the GFS, Big Table, or Megastore systems.

[Speaker 1] (6:54:43 - 6:54:45)

I don't know what you're talking about.

[Speaker 3] (6:54:48 - 6:55:13)

I do have a question. You've talked, I think most of us are engineers and technologists and we live a lot in the realm of thoughts and ideas and in our head and not necessarily in our being. My wife has also described to me these things called feelings that some people have as well.

Could you speak about feelings of anger and frustration and happiness and how they relate to this experience of being?

[Speaker 1] (6:55:14 - 7:02:07)

Yes. Sometimes words are used in a loose way and sometimes what I just described, I sometimes call it feeling the inner body. That word is a very vague word so it can be used to describe what we are just talking about, feeling the inner body, but then there's a different kind of feeling and that's feeling an emotion, for example, that arises.

So there's basically, there's thoughts. Let's look at your entire life. Your entire life consists of basically sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions.

I think that's about it, right? Sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions. Put them together, mix them up.

That's my life. Okay. So that applies to everybody.

Now, the particular mixture differs from person to person. What exactly goes into the sense perceptions and the thoughts and the emotions varies slightly from person to person, but basically that's the mixture. Now, the question is, you can't escape that.

Of course, that's normal life. Is there anything else? Sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions.

Okay. Let's see. There must be something else because how do I know that there's sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions?

Is the ability to recognize, to have a sense perception based on thinking? No, because to have a sense perception, you don't really need to think. You can just look and see.

So what else is there? And this is a key thing. There is something else apart from sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions, which is, we could call it an awareness.

There is a sense perception. There is an emotion. There is a thought.

And that is, we could call that pure consciousness. Otherwise, how could you have a sense perception? So there is something there that enables sense perceptions to be

there, that enables a thought to be there, that enables an emotion to be there.

And that is the one, that is the thing that in most humans is hidden. They don't in other words, they don't know it's there. Because that is presence, which we could also call consciousness, which we could also call awareness.

And that is the spiritual dimension and that is the awakening. Once you realize that that is there, we could also describe that as the space for all those other things. So that's, so let's say, let's compare this room to your consciousness and then we say, OK, there's the furniture in the room.

There's the bodies in the room. And there are the other lights in this room. Those things are in this room.

So if we, if I asked you to describe the room, you would probably describe it in terms of the furniture in it, the walls, the ceiling, whatever you see. You would, when you describe that room, you would miss the most essential thing about this room because it's so obvious that you miss it, which is the space. That really is the essence of this room, isn't the walls or the ceiling or the floor or the furniture or the bodies in this room.

The essence of this room is the space in this room. But space is not something tangible that you can say, ah, there it is. Where?

And the same thing applies to inside. The space of consciousness is the very thing that enables everything else to be, but it's very much like the fish in water that's asked, that says, you talk, why are you always talking about water? You haven't shown it to me yet, says one fish to the other.

The other fish is a spiritual teacher. So what water are you talking about? Where?

What water? And of course you can't, it's everywhere. It's inside you, it's outside you.

But the amazing thing is you can be aware of it, but not as an object, but as the awareness itself. Ah, I got it now. I got it.

But you can't say what it is. You can't say, there it is. That reminds me of something I read in the New Testament where he said, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived.

You cannot say, it's over here or it's over there. But truly, I tell you, the kingdom of heaven is within you. Somebody said that 2,000 years ago, but very few people in the churches understand the depths of it.

It gets completely misinterpreted. But that's the depths of, that's the deepest spiritual teaching. Now that kingdom of heaven is that spaciousness that's in you, it cannot be observed as if it were a chair because it is the observing agent.

It is that which makes all observation possible. So it cannot become an object to itself because it is the eternal subject, the I, consciousness itself, the light of the source, you could call it, the light of God, the light of the one. The ancient Greek philosopher called it the one.

It's a beautiful term. And the Buddha didn't call it anything because he said, if I call it something, people will make it into some idol. So better not call it anything.

So when they asked the Buddha, what about God? Well, what they say is when he was asked that question, he kept noble silence. And of course, that noble silence itself is a state of presence.

So they asked the Buddha, tell us about God. And he went, and that's the answer.

[Speaker 3] (7:02:12 - 7:02:59)

So you've given us some clues on how to explore this within ourselves. You mentioned changing the balance and things we could do with the breath and a note on our computer monitor and looking at nature. These are some very practical suggestions.

I often find for myself that the time when I would probably most benefit from connecting to that part of myself is the time when I'm least able to. It's the time when I'm very activated and I'm either emotional about something or lost in thought or in the heat of the moment. Do you have any suggestions for how to sort of find that even in the midst of these sort of challenges that come along throughout life?

[Speaker 1] (7:03:02 - 7:13:23)

First, I recommend that you practice when you're not being challenged because if you can't do it then, then when you're being challenged, it's impossible. So first you practice when you're relatively undisturbed and there's a moment after getting up or you take a short break in your normal daily routine or several short breaks, one minute breaks, half minute breaks. So when you're not being challenged, then you bring in that awareness.

You become the awareness. You go into the present moment, perhaps as I described just now, starting with sense perceptions, become alert. You have to, an alertness is required to truly perceive things and immediately things become more alive and less problematic.

When you go into sense perception, because the problematic dimension is in the head and you go into sense perception, suddenly you go into the present moment and in the present moment problems disappear. Isn't that strange? The mind says, well I still have them.

Yeah, when you start thinking about them, you have them again. But when you're not thinking about them, you have no problems. Now some of you will argue with that, but

let me explain.

You have situations in your life that can be challenging and you have to deal with these situations, but the only place where you can deal with the challenging situations is in the present moment. And dealing with a challenging situation in the present moment is not a problem. You're dealing with a challenging situation.

You're facing it. You're looking at it. And that looking is important.

What I call looking really is putting your attention on it, which is the power of consciousness. And while you're looking, you're not thinking. Every person who has achieved mastery in any field knows what I mean by looking because there's an absolute presence and then that person does what he or she does.

It flows from that presence. So you look, there's no problem. The problem is when you dwell mentally on something that will happen, could happen, might happen, a problem that's something I have to face next week, but not now, and you're totally absorbed in that, that's a problem.

An interesting thing, I may have even written that in the power of now, if you think you have problems, ask yourself, what problem do I have at this moment? But this moment really means this moment. And then you have to go, hmm, hmm.

Well, I've got all my, my wife, my ex-wife is suing me. I'm about to lose my home. A person close to me is ill.

I might lose my job. I have to look for a new job. OK.

What problem do you have at this moment? You're breathing, feeling the aliveness in the body, looking around. Well, at this moment, I don't actually have a problem.

You have to then admit, if you really go into the present moment, the problem cannot survive in the present moment. That's an amazing realization. Doesn't mean that you no longer deal with what you need to deal with.

You deal with it when the moment comes more effectively, when you don't waste your life energy in the mental realm of creating problems that you cannot be dealt with at this moment. And if you wake up in the middle of the night thinking about your problems and what you can do about them, it's extremely unlikely that you find any solution by worrying at four o'clock in the morning about it. But if you came still at four o'clock in the morning and wake up and go into the inner energy field of the body rather than thinking about your problems, in other words, leave the dimension of problems, come deeply into the present moment, then perhaps the next morning when you wake up, you suddenly say, oh, I know what I have to do now.

I know how I can deal with it now. And the right course of action happens because you've gone there, but not through the problem making faculty in the human mind. So again, coming back to your question, when things are, when you're not being challenged, practice it.

And then when you are being challenged by little things that goes wrong, so to speak, in daily life, tends to happen, you might have noticed. Things don't always go according to your expectations. Sometimes you miss the bus or something, you miss the plane or something else goes wrong.

It tends to happen actually quite a lot. It seems to be part of life. That's, by the way, it's the reason why people go to see movies because the substructure of every movie that you see, we could call it, it applies to virtually every movie you see.

If you can examine any movie you see, what actually happens in the movie? In fact, I can describe every movie to you in three words. Something goes wrong.

audience laughs Because there wouldn't be a movie otherwise. Nothing would happen. Nobody would evolve.

Everything would be dead. But in your own life, you complain. So you go, you see movies to see something go wrong, but when it happens in your own life, you complain.

Not you personally. You've transcended it perhaps already. audience laughs But so the strange thing is, things are not meant not to go wrong.

Going wrong is part of the totality of how life experiences itself. If things didn't go wrong, it would be very uninteresting and nobody would evolve because people only evolve through the challenges that they encounter. And in a good movie, the protagonist or the character changes as he or she faces that which goes wrong in the movie.

In a bad movie, so to speak, the character does not go through any changes. That which goes wrong is only solved on an external level. In the end, the bad guy is killed and that's the end of the movie, but nothing else happens.

So something going wrong is part of how life experiences itself and again, you can then bring awareness to that so that you don't always fall into reactivity when something goes wrong, but you immediately align with it. Or when people say, behave in a way that you find offensive or they behave in a way that they create difficulties for you because you wanted this and they want something else, you don't have to go into hostility or opposition. You can immediately say, oh, that's, you seem to have, this is what is.

And then how can I, how can I approach that without the negativity and just accept that something has gone wrong it's not wrong at all. It's called life. So something going wrong really, what it means is it's called life.

So you can, you welcome every little challenge. So it's a shift in attitude and then your practice becomes easier when you see, you can almost, almost welcome when things happen that before you called things going wrong, little things and later big things, oh, okay. And then you evolve just as a character in a good movie.

I gave a talk, I'm talking about this now because a week ago I was in L.A. and I gave a talk about transformational movies bringing consciousness into the movie industry. I gave as an example two movies by Clint Eastwood. An early one, I think it was called Dirty Harry, and that's the, although it's a very entertaining movie, it's quite satisfying to watch because the bad guy gets killed in the end.

Nevertheless, it's not a transformational movie. In the end you might, you might remember the memorable lines, make my day, when he is about to shoot the bad guy, make my day, punk. And that's the most satisfying moment in the movie for the viewer.

Not a transformational but entertaining movie. And then many, 30 years later Clint Eastwood made a movie again about bad guys and that movie was called Gran Torino. If you haven't seen it, I recommend that you see it.

And that perhaps shows a shift in his own evolution because again we are faced with bad guys but how that is solved, well resolved in the end is very different from the early movie. I'm not telling you how here because if you haven't seen it you want to experience it for yourself. So that's transformational, Gran Torino.

And the same actor, and I think Clint Eastwood directed the Gran Torino one, that probably shows his own evolution of his own consciousness from the early stage to the later stage. But here this really is a reflection of life. You can resist continuously life or you can internally align yourself with life so that your life becomes a good movie rather than a bad movie.

[Speaker 3] (7:13:28 - 7:14:04)

So if there's hope for the movie industry, there's certainly hope for us I think. So we're going to take the time we have left and take questions both from the Google Moderator online system as well as live in the room here. There is one mic in the center and so if you have a question you can approach that mic.

And if the technicians could get the Google Moderator questions up on the monitor here too, that would be helpful. And why don't you introduce yourself and maybe what you do at Google and then ask the question.

[Speaker 1] (7:14:04 - 7:14:14)

Sure. My name is Yonica and I do marketing. So I'm one of the, you mentioned there's lots of engineers.

I'm one of those people that agrees with you in all those codes and terms you mentioned.

[Speaker 2] (7:14:14 - 7:14:15)

I have no clue what you meant earlier.

[Speaker 3] (7:14:16 - 7:14:24)

So I just wanted to know about your journey. You had explained a little bit in the Power Hour Now about the nightmare of waking up when you're 29, 30.

[Speaker 4] (7:14:24 - 7:14:29)

And I just would love to hear about it, how you went from that state of anxiety into where you are right now.

[Speaker 1] (7:14:30 - 7:21:17)

Well, as I, for most people the shift is a gradual process from one state of consciousness to another. And occasionally it happens in some people, as it happened to me, that it happened, well, virtually overnight, the shift from one state of consciousness to another. And I was deeply depressed for many years and close to suicide several times.

And that night, as I described in the Power of Now at the beginning, I disidentified from the thinking mind. It happened, I didn't know that that was what was happening. It just happened.

I can't live with myself any longer, I thought. I was so dreadful. I can't live with myself any longer.

And then suddenly an awareness came in. I didn't know it was called awareness. An awareness came in and looked at the thought.

And the thought seemed, suddenly it looked very strange. The thought seemed to consist of two people, I and myself. I can't live with myself.

So then another thought came, am I one or two? And who is the, who am I and who is that self that I can't live with? That's almost a Zen-like question.

And like all Zen questions, it didn't really have an answer on the conceptual level. So on the conceptual level, I didn't get an answer. But the answer was that the myself and the I suddenly separated.

And I realized, although I couldn't have explained it then, that the myself was a mind-created entity, the me, the poor little unhappy me. It was consisted of mind movement and identity, a mental identity of an unhappy human being with an unhappy history and

a very uncertain future. That probably applies to many humans, not if you work at Google.

But that, there was a separation. And what was, there was an I suddenly that saw that. And that I, years later I realized what that I was.

It was consciousness itself that had, so before there was consciousness and thinking forming one, a unity. My consciousness was trapped in my thinking. Through the suffering at that night and looking at that sentence, the consciousness separated itself from the movement of thinking and the self that I couldn't live with was not being sustained anymore by consciousness.

It was, and it kind of crumbled. It was a false self that crumbled and what was left was simply a space of awareness. And the next morning I felt very peaceful.

Never felt that peaceful before. Nothing had changed in my environment. And I couldn't understand it.

It took probably at least three, four years before I could begin to understand what had happened. All I realized, I'm suddenly so peaceful. The whole world is peaceful.

What's happened? So the mind itself had dissolved and later I talked to some Buddhist monks and others and through listening to them I said I realized when they talked about the teaching of the Buddha, later I also realized that Jesus was talking about the same thing, but I realized the Buddha talked about the delusional self, the unreality of the self, that the self is not real as it's called in the talk. There is no self really.

Anatta is the word in the Pali language in the Buddhist teaching. It's an illusion. That self is an illusion.

And so when I talked to Buddhist monks I began to realize, that was three years later, oh that must be what happened. This must be why I feel so peaceful. So understanding came much later that the realization it kind of just happened.

And then it became a teaching. So I'm now showing to people this is something that you can, that can happen in your life. But for most people it's a gradual process of disidentification from the thinking mind, which doesn't mean you don't think anymore.

It just means your identity or your self isn't trapped in it. So the thinking is free of self and that's very liberating. And you essentially, who you feel yourself to be and who I feel myself to be is not to do with the physical form or my personal history or what I have achieved in life, fortunately, because otherwise you get unhappy if you, if you don't have it.

For many years, before I wrote The Power of Now and it became successful, I was

basically a failure in the eyes of the world. So he's already almost 50 and what has he achieved? My mom said, you have thrown away your life.

You had so many possibilities in your life. You walked out of graduate school in Cambridge. Why did you walk out of there?

My mom and many other people said, this person has failed in life. He has no job. He has no insurance policies.

Nothing. No pension plan. Just almost nothing in the bank.

Failure. And then a few years later, people bought *The Power of Now* and became a bestseller. Oh, a big success.

Okay, if I had derived my identity at that time from what the world was telling me or my mind would have told me if I had been listening to my mind, I would have been very unhappy. And I didn't, so I was fine because my identity wasn't derived from that anymore. And fortunately, even when in the eyes of the world, I suddenly became a success, I don't want to derive my identity from that.

It's a cheap substitute for who I really am. So I'm not, I don't see, I don't derive, but the satisfaction that comes is the satisfaction that the work that's happening, the teaching that's happening is transforming people's lives. That's very satisfying.

I don't get any personal satisfaction though because it's not, I don't feel it as this separate me produced it.

[Speaker 7] (7:21:19 - 7:21:20)

Q Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (7:21:20 - 7:21:21)

A Thanks.

[Speaker 3] (7:21:21 - 7:21:39)

Q I have a question about that. You mentioned for you the transformation came quite suddenly and for others it happens more gradually. Do you have any sense of why that is?

Is it because you had bottomed out and were having these feelings or is it because of a certain ripeness that had brought you to that moment or is it just inexplicable?

[Speaker 1] (7:21:39 - 7:23:19)

A I don't have the answer to that. I don't know why. Some people have said, well, it must

have something to do with past lifetimes, maybe, or whatever it is, but I don't have the, or maybe I suffered more deeply than others.

I don't know. I think there are many people who suffer deeply. So I don't have the answer to that.

Q Thank you. A I'm quoting the Dalai Lama who loves saying, I don't know. Q Ha, ha, ha.

A But usually after he says that, he starts talking and then the answer is actually quite meaningful. Q Ha, ha, ha. A But the wonderful thing is always starting, really what he's starting with is this space.

I don't know. And then something comes. But he doesn't say, yeah, I know.

I probably, as Socrates, if you have read any Plato, ancient Greek philosophy, Socrates also taught in that way, although in Plato, perhaps I'm only talking to a few people here. In Plato, Socrates, the way he teaches is he continuously, when reported by Plato, he teaches as if he didn't know. So he asks these questions to, people ask him a question and he asks, well, what do you think?

How is this? In Plato, Socrates pretends not to know, but I believe the real Socrates, who never wrote anything, the real Socrates actually came from that place of not knowing, but that was misinterpreted by Plato as if Socrates were pretending not to know. But let's not go into deeply into that.

[Speaker 2] (7:23:21 - 7:24:07)

Q Hello. A No. Q My name's Mary.

I work in HR. So here at Google, I have this really wonderful class called Search Inside Yourself, created by Ming, whom I believe you met with. And yesterday was our last class and we talked about compassion and having compassion for the world.

So I work in HR, so all of us HR people have lots of compassion for other people because it's our job. But we also work at Google and Googlers are sort of a high-achieving bunch, not only high-achieving in the eyes of the world, but high-achieving to ourselves, meaning did I get up out of bed today and what did I accomplish? If I didn't accomplish anything, I'm a failure to myself.

So I was wondering if you had any advice for those of us who don't have as much compassion for ourselves.

[Speaker 1] (7:24:08 - 7:30:06)

A Okay. Thanks. Well, yes, compassion for yourself, of course, is as important as compassion for others.

Often I get asked questions like people who did something that they now realize was deeply wrong in the past. Sometimes people ask questions about they brought up their children in a way that they now realize was not very conscious. And so they may have caused suffering to their children or other people find they have caused suffering to loved ones and they now realize that what they did was wrong.

And again, I say this is an example where you need to be compassionate with yourself because no human being can act beyond their level of consciousness. So that was your level of consciousness at the time and you could not go beyond that. And again here, to make demands upon yourself up to a point, it might be a good thing to, as long as you enjoy it, it's a wonderful thing.

When the enjoyment of what you're doing is lost, then you have to be careful because there you have to come to a stop and say, okay, there's something here that's not right because I'm no longer enjoying what I'm doing. That really, that's the danger. And so as long as you enjoy, you don't need compassion.

Don't listen to, some people have a very active mind. Maybe that's what Freud called the super ego or some other entity that criticizes you. Some people have a particular function in their minds that's very critical of themselves.

Perhaps everybody has it to some degree, but some people have it to a high degree. And that's a dreadful thing to live with, living with a voice in your head that continually criticizes you and tells you, you haven't done well enough, you're not good enough, you should have done better. I mean, if you had to live with a person like that, you would leave.

I mean, it would be horrible to live with a person who continuously tells you these things, but if that thing is stuck in your head, what can you do? Now, what you can do is to become aware that all that it is, it's a particular pattern in your mind. It's a particular way in which your mind works.

And so it's a, you could call it a sub-personality, but what it really is, it's a mind pattern that operates in you. And when you bring awareness to it, you can recognize it as a mind pattern in you. In other words, you no longer believe every thought that arises that it says.

You recognize it's an old pattern that says the same thing that it said five years ago, or ten years ago, and it says that all the time. And you recognize it, so in other words, you're not trapped in the thoughts anymore. This is, again, the whole thing we are talking about.

You're not, you don't believe in every thought that comes into your head. What that really means is there's an awareness beyond the thought. And you realize, there's a

voice in my head saying this again.

That's all it is. And when you don't energize it with your identification, it begins to subside. And in this way, you become free of the, of this dreadful burden of having that thing in your head talking to you and making your life miserable.

But what matters is the awareness needs to be there that frees you, because then you become the awareness rather than being the thought, or being trapped in the thought or possessed by the thought. Again, there's a movie that many of you have probably seen called A Beautiful Mind. It's about a scientist, actually based on a real person, what happened to him, quite a genius in his field, but he developed delusions.

He saw people that weren't there, whatever it's called, clinically, schizophrenia, whatever. And the great thing about the movie is the viewer, up to the point where the protagonist realizes that these things are illusions, the viewer of the movie doesn't know it either. The viewer participates in the illusions of the protagonist.

He believes these people are real, too. Until suddenly, the protagonist realizes, oh my God, I'm seeing things that are not there. And then he continues to see these things, but suddenly there's an awareness in him.

And so, although these people still appear to him that are not really there, there's an awareness in him there that he's no longer totally reactive to them. He doesn't feed them with his reaction. And gradually, they subside over years.

It takes years for them to subside. But the decisive point is, although the word is never mentioned, the decisive point is the awareness. Wow.

And that's the same thing that applies to any pattern in the human mind, not just a totally insane pattern. Bring awareness to it so that you're not tortured by that. And real compassion always arises out of awareness anyway.

[Speaker 3] (7:30:09 - 7:30:22)

My childhood violin teacher used to shake his finger at me and say, you hear, but you don't listen. And he didn't mean it as a compliment, but it seems like this may be the technique for dealing with the inner critic.

[Speaker 1] (7:30:22 - 7:30:25)

Ah, yes. Very good. Yes.

[Speaker 4] (7:30:28 - 7:31:04)

Yes? Hi. Thank you first, Eckhart, for coming.

Tip the microphone. Oh. Yeah.

Thank you. I wanted to ask you, it seems like the state that you're talking about of being at peace and being in the moment, it's a very appealing state. You feel more in touch.

And I'm wondering why society or people, why is there this attraction to distraction?

[Speaker 1] (7:31:05 - 7:35:36)

And what is it about us that leads us to develop these systems that take us away from that? Well, distractions, excitement, stimulus, are kinds of drugs or substitutes for the true feeling of aliveness within yourself. So in the absence of that true feeling of aliveness within yourself, which we could call connectedness with being, connectedness with source, you have to look to the outside for something to make you feel more alive.

Because when you're totally trapped in your thinking mind, there's a lack of aliveness. There's a sense that something fundamental is missing in my life. It's an unconscious sense for many people.

But that is the basis for many people's lives is actually a sense of lack. And that's an amazing thing, if you really look at that, that the basis for your life is there's something missing. And there are millions of people on the planet who live their lives on that basis without even fully recognizing it, as if continuously they were telling themselves and certainly feeling, there's something missing here.

So they're always, how can I fill that thing that's missing? They don't know what's missing, but there's something, does it, it may sound familiar to some of you because it's such a prevalent mind pattern, something missing. I need something.

And of course what's missing is the true sense of connectedness with being, with aliveness. And then of course you look for, OK, what's the next fix that I can get? Because, and then you kind of, you become a little bit greedy and addictive for some, for stimulus.

That's why the movies, the bad movies, they need to, they produce more and more things that stimulate it more and more into violence and so, because at least it's a substitute feeling of aliveness. And then you look for the next fix. Some people get it in drugs or alcohol.

It's almost like needing to suck up something to fill that thing that's missing. Or you're looking to another human being to fill it. Sex, where's my next, the next, or even the next affair, the excitement that comes from you just starting a new love affair.

Wow, now it's really happening. Of course, and then you start living together and then it goes downhill from there. So that doesn't work.

And so, always looking for something and not knowing that what you've been looking for is actually already within. It's in you. It's taking attention instead of out there looking for it, going there.

This is why I start in The Power of Now giving the parable about a beggar sitting on an old box, holding his baseball cap and, can you spare a dime? Can you spare, for years he sits on this box, can you spare a dime? And until finally somebody comes along and he doesn't give him a dime and says, what's in that box you're sitting on?

That's, I'm telling that parable in the book. He said, nothing, I've been sitting on it for years. It's just an old box.

And the man says, well, look inside. And he finally gets, OK, and it's full of gold. He's been sitting on it for years begging.

It's just a little parable. Of course, the real thing is not even close to you. It's essentially part of who you are.

So that's the reason why people, people also, they even look for stimulus in drama, in relationships, because it makes them feel, well, at least we are still alive. We are fighting. We must be alive.

[Speaker 3] (7:35:40 - 7:35:44)

Thank you. I think we'll have time just for one more question.

[Speaker 4] (7:35:47 - 7:36:26)

Hey, my name is Alex. I am an equipment maintenance tech, so I keep rooms like this operational. So you gave us some very practical things to try to rid ourselves of distraction.

I'm curious about another, another issue, really strong emotion. You know, for example, like right now, I'm like nervous. There's, there's no reason to be nervous.

Nothing bad could possibly happen. How do you overcome emotions like that, and jealousy, hatred, any strong emotion? Do you have any practical tips that we could try for that?

[Speaker 1] (7:36:27 - 7:41:56)

Thank you. Well, first, it's helpful to see the connection, which is usually the case between the particular thoughts that you are thinking and the emotion that you feel. Most of the time, the emotions are caused by particular patterns in your mind.

For example, anxiety is caused by thinking about possible future things that may

happen, or things that you want to happen, but they may not happen. You may not get what you want. You may not get what you need.

You may lose what you already have. These things are all mind patterns that create fear. So it's, very often it is the thought that creates the emotion.

And the thought creates the emotion because you are totally, you totally believe in the thought. In other words, you're totally identified with the thought. Then the body responds as if the thought were a reality.

I might lose my job. If you think that, you wake up in the middle of the night, and then you start thinking more thoughts on those lines. The body can't tell the difference.

The body kind of responds to the thoughts that go through your mind. They affect the physiology of the body. I mean, if you doubt that, think of biting into a lemon, and you'll find saliva accumulating in your mouth.

So what you think affects the body. The body believes your thoughts to be real. So when you think that you might lose your job, you've lost your job already, according to the body, and you're destitute.

And that's how the body reacts, and that's how the emotion is created. So it's often then by looking, seeing a thought as untrue, that you actually begin to become free. You can only see it as untrue if there's an awareness there that is aware that there is a thought.

Without the awareness, there's only the thought. The thought then swallows up your entire consciousness, and there's nothing else you can do then. But with awareness, here's the awareness and here's the thought.

And then the thought may still operate for a while, but it's not empowered anymore, and the emotion then is also going to weaken. There may be times when there's not much thought, as in this one you just said, when you came up to the microphone, you felt nervous. Perhaps you didn't have any particular thought on this occasion.

You just came nervous because many people, when they go up to a microphone and speak in public, feel nervous. And again, in these cases, it's a question of simply allowing, acknowledging the emotion, and allowing it to be there. As I sometimes put it, you become the space for it.

You allow it to be there. So you could step up to the microphone. Actually, what you said is very helpful.

When you go to the microphone and you start by saying, I feel nervous, my hands, palms of my hands are sweaty because I'm here publicly. It's the beginning of allowing it to be there without feeling that I shouldn't be feeling nervous. Then you feel even more

nervous.

But if you allow the emotion to be there, there comes a little space around it, and there's an aware space. Yes, there's nervousness, but there is an awareness around it. So you're not totally in the nervousness.

You allow it. And when you share it with others, it's even, it's a lovely thing when you share an emotion in that way with others rather than inflicting your emotion on them and saying, you did that to me. But when you say, when you said that, this is what I felt, there's an awareness there rather than, you made me feel this.

You can say, when you said that, this is what I felt. Or at this moment, this is what I feel. Everybody loves that and there's an honesty with that rather than coming up to the microphone and pretending not to be nervous.

It's actually much more powerful and you connect more deeply. If you're ever going to public speaking, perhaps you will, you connect much more deeply to the audience when instead of hiding the fact that you're nervous, you start off by saying, I feel really nervous. Then you connect with everybody.

If you're pretending, you don't connect. So again, just a brief summary. See what thoughts are causing the emotion, which is often the case.

Or in other cases, if an emotion just arises, allow it to be, be the space for it. And it's part of your experience of the present moment. And you might as well say yes to it because whatever arises in the present moment is as it is already.

Whether you argue with it or not, the present moment is always as it is. That's the is-ness. And when you become friendly with the is-ness, that in itself is a transformation of consciousness.

[Speaker 3] (7:42:00 - 7:42:32)

So there's a lot of people to thank. I want to start by thanking those that tuned in on the webcast. I want to thank all of you Googlers who chose to take your afternoon and spend it here with us.

I want to thank Rich and the learning and development team here at Google who make events like this possible. And of course, I want to thank Eckhart on behalf of all of us. Thank you for your wisdom.

Thank you for your being and also your doing in the world, your choice to share this knowledge with us. You've given us a lot to think about and more importantly, the ability not to think at all.

[Speaker 1] (7:42:33 - 7:42:34)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (7:43:47 - 7:47:09)

Rising with the tide, breaking with the wave. I surrender any notion that there is someone here to save. As if I'm separate from the ocean.

And I surrender to the mystery. In the lap of God I rest my case. The force that bore this world can carry me.

Who am I to question grace? Who dreamed me into form? Whose will sustains me?

Who brings what comes my way? And when I die, who claims me? Looking back sometimes, I have to laugh.

What a lot of work it's been. Clinging to a sinking raft. Just to keep from falling in.

So drown me in your darkest pain. Your softest kiss. Your sweet despair.

I've seen your face now. I know your name. And I can find you anywhere, I swear.

And I surrender to the mystery. And to the love that rises up to see. Come what may I vow to wait and see.

I really don't know anything. I surrender to the mystery. And to the love that rises up to see.

The force that bore this world can carry me. I really don't know anything. I really don't know anything.

I really don't know anything.

[Speaker 1] (7:47:40 - 8:32:56)

It's an amazing thing when this is just a sound of course, but even that can be disturbing when you are looking for something to be disturbed by. And even with a little thing like that, it's amazing to see that, that which was disturbing, when it's no longer resisted, is surrounded by peace. And that applies to small things, like that sound.

It also applies to big things. One could almost say anything can take you there. Anything can take you into peace.

Any condition that arises now that is not resisted. And very often if it is unpleasant or not harmonious, very often it will quickly disappear. And many of you have experienced that in your own life.

That things that you did not want, but were there, didn't go away until you completely

accepted that they are there. And suddenly they were gone. And similarly something that you want in your life, many of you have also experienced that already, when the wanting goes, wanting implies future and so on, suddenly it's there.

When your inner, your sense of self no longer depended on it, it's there. So miracles happen through surrender. Incredible miracles, both small miracles and big miracles happen through surrender.

I recommend a film called Groundhog Day, which shows the human condition as one man is forced to relive the same day again and again and again. And he hates it. And he can't get out of it.

And he hates it even more. And he tries to commit suicide and he kills himself many times and every morning he wakes up again in the same day. Until finally he doesn't resist anymore.

Finally he allows that to be and that day from being the most dreadful day becomes transformed into a nice day. He helps so many people because his resistance is gone. That day becomes beautiful, wonderful and in the end he doesn't want to believe it anymore.

Let's stay here, he says, and then he's out of it. A beautiful parable. So although in the media to a large extent the old consciousness is still reflected, occasionally these days you can see the new consciousness coming through here and there in films.

They may not even be on the surface spiritual, be called spiritual as such and yet something is coming through the new. Whether it be a film about playing golf, the legend of vagabonds, a film about stillness and connect with animals, which I saw recently, although it's quite old, the horse whisperer, somebody who is able to enter the state of stillness and communicate with horses through stillness. And even American Beauty is a film that brings in something, a new consciousness comes in what is possible.

That last one I mentioned is a film where you are shown a piece of paper being tossed about by the wind and you watch that for two minutes and it's beautiful. It's miraculous, something nobody would look at twice. Every moment when you give it your attention has a beauty sometimes on the surface, sometimes hidden underneath the surface.

On the surface, in nature, how your perception of nature deepens when you are present as you walk in nature. The depth that a flower has that it didn't have when you labelled it mentally immediately because you relate it to a mental label, not to a flower. Oh, look at that beautiful so-and-so, blah, blah, blah.

No, truly look. And then the beauty that is hidden even and particularly in the face of disaster, loss and death, which everybody sooner or later will face. In him or herself and

will also face with people close to you.

And there the beauty is not apparent immediately on the surface of things, on the surface of that moment. And the thinking mind can only see the surface and reacts to the surface phenomenon of this moment. And at this moment something or someone may be dying and the mind calls it dreadful, bad, awful.

If death is dreadful, bad, awful, then all of life is dreadful, bad, awful. Every form is destined to die. Each one of us in this room could have a date of death imprinted on his or her hand.

And you look, oh, what's my date? Well, it'll happen. When it happens, it won't be tomorrow, but now.

So if death is bad, then nothing makes sense. The whole of life is misery because everything is already condemned. The moment of birth, everything is already condemned to death.

What a dreadful, tragic, cruel world that is if death is bad. But it's a fact, it is. And what it conceals is beautiful and sacred.

And I want to point to this without giving you any explanation, mental or conceptual thing. That explains it somehow so that you can rearrange in your mind the way in which you judge death. Maybe it's not so bad after all.

You'll have another incarnation. You can go on. You'll have another opportunity to be miserable.

To look more closely at death without taking refuge in concepts, beliefs. Because you may believe or not believe that there's another incarnation coming. I'm not saying there is or isn't because we are not dealing here with belief.

If I say, yes, you will reincarnate, some of you will say, great, I knew that already. And some others will say, oh, I don't think that's true. And it would require belief.

Nothing here requires really belief on your part. So we'll stay with just the fact of death, which comes sooner or later. Which also comes in other forms in your life as loss, great loss of one kind or another.

Of physical ability, of social status, of a partner. Somebody leaves you, something leaves you. And, of course, the actual death of a human being.

Or the sense of your own approaching death. And usually this is regarded as so dreadful that you can't even talk about it. In hospitals, even now, they don't mention it ever.

Oh, no, you're not going to die. No, no, nobody dies here. And so facing what is becomes

very powerful when that which is, is death.

And you face death. Without seeking refuge in some explanations. Just face it as you would face a flower or anything that appears, takes form in this moment.

But when something dies, one could say it's not that something is taking form at this moment. It's more beautiful than that. It's beautiful if something takes form at this moment.

You could call that birth. But death is something loses form at this moment. A form of life dissolves.

And when that is faced completely, that which is beyond form shines through the dissolving form. And that is why, although the present moment is always sacred, and you know that when you move your attention into it, it could be anywhere. And I don't need to define further what that means.

Only the mind would ask, please define sacred. I don't understand. You know what it means directly at this moment.

When you hear that this moment is always sacred, but you don't know this unless your attention moves and you become aligned with it. It's always sacred. But it is more deeply sacred at the moment of death, which could be your own death or death of somebody close to you.

Even the death of not necessarily a human being, but the death of some form that contained your sense of self. It dissolves. And more people have realized the truth of who they are and the truth of life through death, through facing death, or some great loss, which is the equivalent of death.

More people have realized it through that than through any spiritual teaching. Something that was defined in form loses its form. And if you've ever been with someone, I've spoken to many people who sat next to someone who died, and also to one or two people who actually died and came back.

And whenever that fact of death was not resisted, it was realized as a moment of incredible depth and sacredness. A woman I met witnessed how her son, 30-year-old son, died in hospital. She was sitting next to him.

And she said that was the most sacred moment of her life, and she was never the same after that. And that acceptance only, in her case, lasted for two minutes. After that, thought came in, and the emotions that come with those thoughts came in, and it was called dreadful.

But for two minutes, she was in the state of acceptance, and that had an incredible

depth and sacredness. And even if you have seen people that were approaching death, sometimes you can see already before actual physical death happens, the form is already becoming, one could say, transparent almost. And something shines through that can almost be described as light.

And what that is, is the unconditioned, the essence, consciousness itself, shining through the dissolving form. So the most sacred thing in life is that which is most feared by the egoic entity, because the egoic entity is form, is identification with form as me, is identification with the physical form as me, and the psychological form, the story of me. And that goes.

In some cases, when people know they are going to die soon, it can happen that before the physical form dissolves, the psychological form of me doesn't survive in the face of death, when it's accepted. So already the me entity that perhaps they were controlled by, identified with throughout their lives, shortly before death, it could be a few days, a few weeks, a few months, already dies. And then a flowering happens through that human being.

It's the realization of who they are beyond the form. They realize it not as some intellectual realization, a deep experiential realization, as deep peace, and a knowing beyond needing any kind of proof that there is no death, that it is a form dissolving. And people have realized it in the face of great loss, when some form that they had invested with self left them.

It could be the loss of a partner, it could be the loss of all your possessions in the stock market crash. In the stock market crash, they happen occasionally, some people jump out of the window. They cannot separate, this is famous in the 30s or whenever it happened, many people apparently lost all their money, and many jumped out of the windows.

They could not separate from their story-based sense of self. And the story-based sense of self was deprived of their main ingredient. But it has happened to others who in the face of total loss, which is a kind of death, experienced a sudden inner opening up, a sudden space.

Why was there a sudden inner space? Because the inner form that they had identified with in their psychological form identity dissolved, it died. When a form dissolves, that which is deeper than form shines through the hole that it leaves, the opening.

This is an amazing thing. And it applies to every kind of death. An opening appears, one could say, in the fabric of phenomenal existence.

For a moment, that opening appears in what before was a dense fabric of phenomenal existence. And suddenly, within that density of the fabric of phenomenal existence, a

little thing there dissolves. And for a moment, just light comes through.

Whereas before it was filtered through many layers of texture. And so it's the deepest spiritual thing is death. And that is good to know, because each one of you will face it sooner or later.

But the amazing thing is, this is death here. Because the form identity, that which I thought I was, the thought form of me, you realize is not me. It dissolves as a me entity.

So here, and this is the beauty of true spiritual teaching, in the presence of true spiritual teaching, which is not of a person, the teaching that is happening here, if you even call it teaching, is arising out of this energy field. Each one of you contributes to this teaching. To have a true view of it, you would look upon it as if it were, these words are arising out of your own consciousness.

There is no separation. And so a true spiritual teaching is similar to death. It also is an opening where suddenly spaciousness appears, where before there was only form, identification with form.

So you lose your fear of death here, because you're dying already. It's voluntary death. And it's beautiful.

And you realize, of course, people think life and death are the two opposites. Of course they are not. Birth and death are the opposites.

One can't exist without the other. Life has no opposite. Life is beyond form.

And it's that realization. When a thought subsides in your mind, even if only for a moment, that's death, ultimately speaking, because as one thought subsides, the next one has not appeared yet. There also is an opening.

And so this becomes a state of permanent connectedness, as long as you still walk around in this form, a state of permanent connectedness with that dimension of the formless one life that you are, the one consciousness that you are. That is the essence of all life forms that could be anywhere in the universe. The essence of that, the one intelligence, the one consciousness manifesting as billions of life forms, one of them the appearance of a person with a name, a little history, a little past, a little future, and then that form dissolves.

And to realize that which is beyond form frees you from identification with form, which is the world. And do you realize it? Here, now, when thought subsides.

Oh. And in many of you, spaces, although really one should only use this word in the singular, but I'll just for a while use it in the plural, spaces in many of you of pure awareness, pure presence are arising already in your life. So that is a beautiful death

that is already happening, which is the transformation of consciousness.

You don't have to wait for physical death to come close to you. When it comes, it's beautiful. But you don't have to wait for that.

You can embrace that now. And that is the transformation where you are no longer identified with a form. The form is still there, yes.

The story is still there, but it's not who I am. My life situation is still there. It might be good, it might be bad.

It's not who I am. Who am I? I am that which is prior to all form.

Is that a belief? No, any belief is form. How do I know that?

I know that in the stillness of presence. I know that when I can look upon something, whether it be a flower, a tree, or even a man-made thing, although nature is more conducive to this realization, you look upon something without the old compulsive need to immediately label, interpret, or call it something, or see how you relate to it, how it fits in with me and my story. You just look, and there is a clear space of awareness, and it can happen in this moment as you sit here.

You are perceiving the words as if they were coming out of yourself. You are perceiving perhaps a body sitting on a chair. You are perceiving peripherally the rest of this room.

It's there. And the amazing thing is that those perceptions are arising in awareness. They are not labeled, interpreted, judged.

You don't need to find a personal relationship to those perceptions. They are allowed to be. They are now.

They are allowed to be. So what you have at any moment, the one moment, no matter what form it may take, the moment always has two dimensions. And this is so important.

It should be what children could learn at the age of six, the first thing at school, the one important realization in everybody's life is this. There are two dimensions. Now usually humans are only conscious of one dimension, the world.

The dimension of objects that arise in consciousness as sense perceptions and thoughts and emotions. That is the world that most people inhabit, the world of object consciousness, sense perceptions. And of course you get drawn into them and then immediately the mind comes in with thought objects to find how thought relates to that perception and that perception.

That is the world. That is the human mind. That is the only world that people know and it's a fearful world because objects are not reliable.

They come and go. It's form. They are born.

They die. So you have to hang on. Something leaves.

You're here. You're there. You inhabit only object consciousness and your whole sense of self is object consciousness.

You have a self image. You have a conceptualized sense of self, of me, and every concept is a thought. Every thought is an object in consciousness.

That's the world people inhabit and they're looking for something to free them from that dilemma which everybody perceives with a life that human existence is a dilemma and everybody is looking somehow to get free, but they are looking for freedom from the dilemma of human existence and the pain of human existence. They are looking for freedom in the realm of object consciousness. Where can I find that thing that's going to free me finally?

It could be a person. It could be some achievement. It could be some money.

Or it could be the idea that I have of spiritual enlightenment. I've just got to get there. And then spiritual enlightenment becomes an object in your mind and you say, I need to have that.

That will free me. I tried the two million dollars. Didn't work.

Didn't free me. I've tried the relationships. I've tried knowledge.

But now another object in consciousness. So that's the world. And it's a world in which I like to quote because that is a world where the collective world and the personal world of each human being consists of that because what is in the individual manifests as the collective, the collective of human history, which, as I've quoted many times before, I love that quote, Churchill defined human history as one damn thing after another.

And he's right. And for many people in their personal lives, they could say that too. How's your life?

Or how has your life been? One damn thing after another. Just when I thought I made it, something else cropped up and didn't want that.

Or then I lost it again. Or I thought it would make me happy, but it made me unhappy. As the old saying goes, there are two ways of being unhappy, getting what you want and not getting what you want.

And so looking, looking, looking, not realizing what they are looking for as if it were something external to them, as if it were something that can be obtained at some future point that never comes. Instead of looking there, the one where they are not looking is

what they were looking for, that which frees them from that dimension, although you're still in it, but frees you internally is, quite simply, the realization of the other dimension. So what I called object consciousness is the dimension of the manifested world.

Things everywhere. And the other dimension is the dimension of the unmanifested. And we could call that space consciousness, to realize that space is already here within you.

And a few people have realized it through death, when something important in their object consciousness dissolved and left behind a gaping hole. And they faced it. Somehow, for some reason, they just sat there and didn't run away from it and didn't seek refuge in explanations and just sat with it, as the woman sat with her dying son.

And the hole appeared. And it was the most sacred moment in her life and changed her forever. And that is already here now.

And it's here, it begins to arise in the simple, the moment you look at a flower and perceive it clearly, without any mental commentary. So in that moment, the two dimensions, you are conscious in the two dimensions. You are conscious of the manifested.

And you sense that field of stillness, of presence, in which that perception happens, is the underlying unmanifested. It's the essence of who you are. And perhaps then it's gone again, and perhaps after a few seconds, words come in.

And then again another moment comes when you look upon something else, a stone. And there's the sense perception. And the old, deeply ingrained habit of automatic, compulsive labeling is relinquished.

And in some of you, in many of you, I know this is already happening spontaneously and you may not even notice it, except as peace coming into your life occasionally. And then once you notice it, you can consciously contribute to it by more and more existing in this world, especially when no demands are being made. And there are often during the day, there are times when you can just be, you're waiting for something, standing somewhere, sitting somewhere, and simply perceiving, looking, hearing, whatever, what other perceptions there may be.

And the perception arises in a field of simple presence or stillness. This is an amazing thing, but to the mind, the mind is thought, that is insignificant. It says, what, it's not interesting.

What's the next thing? Okay, you've spoken about stillness, now let's go on to the next thing. It doesn't recognize it.

What happened to me spontaneously to this form, overnight there was a letting go of compulsive labeling. There was deep surrender, and suddenly the next morning there

was simply allowing everything to be as it is. The need to label was gone.

Labeling could still happen when it was needed, but a lot of the time it wasn't needed and isn't needed. So I would walk around the city, especially the first few days or weeks, because it was totally new, and maybe some people thought I had taken something. And it is true that some people get a glimpse of that when they take a drug, and for a moment they are forced into presence because their sense perceptions become so acute that they can't think anymore.

And it can be a realization for some people of what life can be like without the constant noise in the head, that there can be space, but this doesn't last, the drug won't last. This is much better. So I walked around in amazement, and that is a state of amazement that really stays with you, because you never say, OK, what's the expression?

Seen this, done that, or been there, done it, or whatever the expression is. That means it's all old. And for many people, the older they get, the more lifeless their world becomes.

They get older and they've seen it all, they've done it all, nothing new. OK, so the world becomes stale. Not the world, but their state of consciousness, which is heavy with past.

And so breaking through that, that happened to me spontaneously, and I walked around in that state of every sense perception happened within a field of peace. And that was just amazing. I was walking around Oxford Street in London, one of the least peaceful places, a million people walking along, trying to do their shopping, buses and taxis in the middle with fumes, and I was walking around, oh, it's peace.

All the sense perceptions arising in a field of stillness. And I didn't realize until much later when I talked to a Zen monk a year later, who said one sentence, he said, he just said, Zen is to stop thinking, that's all. That's what it is.

Oh, that's what it is. I didn't know that I'd stopped thinking. And this is, I know that this is the shift in consciousness that is destined to happen and is already happening on the planet.

I know that many of you already spontaneously experience those kinds of perceptions when you can simply look here, just to mention the two main senses, and the perception arises in an alert spaciousness, peaceful stillness. So you are not perceiving as a person anymore, as a me with a history, and the person of course wants something from the object of perception. There's always some kind of relationship that the person is seeking to make with the object of perception.

Either the person wants it, or the person fears it, or somehow trying to figure out how this object of perception fits into me. Is it important to me? How can I, am I going to be more of me when I add that to me?

[Speaker 7] (8:32:57 - 8:32:58)

Hmm, hmm.

[Speaker 1] (8:32:59 - 8:53:00)

Yeah, okay, I want that, yeah. And then you, the flower that you were looking at, you pick it, because now you can take it home. It's mine.

Just a small example, it happens on all levels. You meet another human being. Again, how can you be with that being and look at that human being, listen to that human being, allow this moment to be, this human being that appears here in front of you at this moment, and just listen, just look.

Without the person, is it possible to do that? Yes, it's possible, because it's time for that. And people are telling me it's already happening in their life, and then it becomes obscured again, and then it comes again.

But now that you can see it, you can contribute to it also by simply choosing presence and becoming aware of the underlying field, which is the deepest level of who you are, as the song that Kirtana sang at the beginning, the title of that was, I am. Not I am this, or that, because that would mean identifying with an object in consciousness. But when the identification, what remains is consciousness, I am.

The innermost sense of who you are that got mixed up with identification with objects in your consciousness, the innermost sense remains. That which you are really fearful, that which you have a feeling there's something of great value, something precious here, and I don't want to lose that, I don't want to die, but this precious sense of beingness, of aliveness, of presence, in the usual state, gets entangled with objects in consciousness, identifications. And so you derive your identity from the story, the accumulated objects in your mind.

But if you look to the essence of that sense of self, there is something real there, but it's not the story. At the core of it, there's something real, and that's consciousness. Even the greatest illusion, the greatest dream, hallucination, in every illusion or hallucination, there must be something real in it, or otherwise it would not be.

If it is, it is a form that consciousness has taken, temporary form. A hallucination is a form that only you see and nobody else agrees with. The rest is this world.

Everybody more or less agrees on what they see. In ultimate terms, one could say it is also similar to a shared hallucination, especially the nightmare world of the ego. Oh, dreadful.

So the simple thing, what looks so insignificant to thought, you can walk around the city,

wherever you're at home, walking between here and your car, and simply be there as an aware presence. The person, what do you need the person for? When you need to remember something, it will be there.

When you pick up the phone, you don't say, this is the nameless presence. Or as one man said, who wanted to teach me a lesson when I asked him, when were you born? He said, I was never born.

Oh, sorry I asked that question. He's right, of course, although the way he said it was wrong. It was an ego thing, but ultimately that statement is true.

The essence is, who you are was never born. So the shift now is from being a heavy person. Every person is heavy.

There are degrees of heaviness. I'm not talking about physical heaviness, psychological heaviness. There are degrees of heaviness.

Some persons are heavier than others. Some are very heavy. Wherever they step, nothing grows.

Humanity as a whole is heavy. The collective person that humanity is, and see what humanity is doing to the planet. One could almost say that somewhat humorous comment I made could apply to the whole of humanity.

Nothing grows where they step. And that is the heaviness of the collective unconsciousness. And so the shift then is from personal, exclusively personal sense of self to realizing yourself as aware presence and be that.

And you will find, because we are at a transitional stage in the shift of consciousness, it is possible that you may walk away from here and never again fall back into resistance to what is, never again fall back into identification with thought movement and be present for the rest of your life, which after all is only this moment ever, but always, it's possible. More frequently it happens that you shift back and forth from being a person and totally believing that you are a person. This means drama starts.

You become an active participant in the drama of your story. And then suffering comes. And then you remember, oh, I forgot the now.

Any suffering that arises in your life must mean you lost the now somewhere. I lost the now. And then you go back into now and realize the space of now is okay.

Whatever appears in the now, I can face that. The now is never that complicated. It comes, you face it.

And action arises, or non-action arises if there's nothing you can do. That's always simple. Even if you think there's a choice in this moment, should I do this or this or this,

when you let go of trying to figure out through thought, you just face the situation.

Should I jump this way off or should I jump that way? You just face it and then you find yourself moving this way or that way. And that comes out of presence.

And so you face this moment and your life becomes non-complex. And, of course, the power is always there that arises out of consciousness or presence. The power to face what is, is always there.

The only thing you can never face is the fantasies that the mind constructs of what might happen to you or what you might lose or what you might not get or a situation that may arise. What's going to happen? What am I going to say?

What's going to happen to me? Am I going to make it? And when am I going to make it before it's too late?

Have I missed it already? Is my whole life wasted? I've probably missed the boat already.

There's not much I can do now. So many mistakes I made. Oh, I could have achieved this and that.

Why didn't I? If only my parents had been different. Many people have this story of their life has been a failure, wasted.

Not silly story. Every story is unsatisfying. Even if it looks great for a moment, you get miserable again.

It's built into every story. Step out. Step out of it.

We are just presence. Hmm. And then the life is miraculous.

Even the city. The dance of life forms. Birds fly.

You just look. And it's gone. Clouds.

Nature has depth to it because you don't go through it with a screen of mind. It's just there. Oh.

Human beings, and this is so important, when that dimension, when that dimension of what I call space consciousness is present in your interactions with other human beings, that's what really everybody is waiting for, is for that dimension to arise. They're waiting for you. One could almost say every interaction, you can bring that.

Who are you? On the surface, you're a person. In your depths, you are consciousness.

So you interact with humans in the same way that you look at a flower, allowing them to be. They are what is at this moment. And you look.

Perhaps you sense the inner body so that you don't get drawn into mental stuff about them. And you listen to them. And you listen without preparing the next statement mentally.

You just listen. You don't know. You don't know.

People used to come to me for counseling, or whatever they called it, spiritual counseling sessions. And in the past, many people came with problems, sometimes heavy problems. I didn't know the answer.

I don't know the answer to these heavy problems. How do I know? So all I could do was sit there with them and listen, and becoming comfortable with not knowing, because that's part of it, and that's the little egoic entity that doesn't like that.

It says, I need to know what this is all about. I need to know what you are about. What are your motivations?

What do you want from me? Whatever you can figure out about another person. Is their conditioning combined with your conditioning?

And it's a shared hallucination. And then you can be with someone, and they're telling you their heavy problems. And you know that you don't know.

And you are comfortable with not knowing and allowing that space of simple listening to be there. But it's alert. It's not a listening that goes to sleep.

It's an alert listening, relaxed alert. So the words appear within that spaciousness that comes through this form. That is the dimension that most humans are not conscious of, the unmanifested space consciousness.

And when that dimension is present in this dimension, they're not really separate because they're intertwined. There is space consciousness even in... Let's leave that aside.

And suddenly within that space, things happen. Realizations happen. The person may stop speaking, as sometimes happens.

The story suddenly peters out, and they look around and suddenly feel there's a peace. What's this? One woman came with a heavy story, talked to me for half an hour or an hour about it.

And I just, spaciousness was there. I didn't know the answer. The problems were so complicated, nobody could have solved them.

And after 30 or 45 minutes of talking, she stopped. And it was like waking up. She had all these notes that she needed to all the problems, and she put that...

And she looked at me, and the next, her statement was a miracle. I couldn't believe it. She said, There's only love, isn't there?

Yes. Thank you. Goodbye, she said.

At other times it happened that some answer came through me, just suddenly said something. It just came out. Just like this talk comes out.

It's not rehearsed. It just comes out. Or something suddenly, words come out of the other person's mouth.

It suddenly reveals something. But they arise because there's a space of presence. And that space is intelligent, vastly intelligent.

That is true intelligence. And it's only when you're connected with that, that love can be present even in this world. Because it arises out of that.

It doesn't arise out of the object consciousness. That's the message. You know that.

You recognize it. So your mission is clear. To be, to know yourself as awareness, as presence.

And to put up with the person, yes. Honor it also. It's the world of form.

You honor the world of form. You don't say, I don't want nothing to do with the world of form. All I want is God.

But you're still here. And the world of form will keep bothering you. We are talking, of course, of God's realization as the essence of your being.

I would like Kirtana to come and sing her last song, which is my favorite song. If I cry, don't worry. I sometimes cry when I listen to that song.

And the title of that song refers to exactly what we have been talking about this afternoon, pointing to what we've been living, experiencing this afternoon. And it's nice sometimes to hear the same teaching in slightly different words expressed again. So the title of that song is, Who You Really Are.

And that's what this gathering is about. Knowing who you are beyond concepts, beyond a conceptualized sense of self. It's the end of the dreadful thing that is a conceptualized sense of self, the burden of that.

Listening to this is a beautiful meditation in itself. Thank you, Kirtana.

[Speaker 2] (8:53:37 - 8:58:42)

Could there be more to this life we call mine than a journey through space or a storyline

more to life than the body can sense than the mind can conclude from experience Does who we are begin with breath depend on form or end with death Strip away these roles these names and tell me what remains and who you really are who you really are We measure success by the things we accrue or the bonds that we form or the deeds we do but these too will pass as hard as we try to hold on to form Form will die but inherent in this dance of form is the chance to see what's yet unborn and the choice to throw this chance away and be caught up in the play of who we think we are who we think we are This is your lifetime It could end at any time Where is your attention? Where is your prayer?

Where is your song? In a fortunate life comes a call to be free from the cycle of bondage and misidentity to wake from the dream and finally realize the truth of one's being before the body dies So before the final scene is passed See the screen on which it's cast See what's seeing this me and you and then you will see who you really are Who you really are Who you really are Who you really are